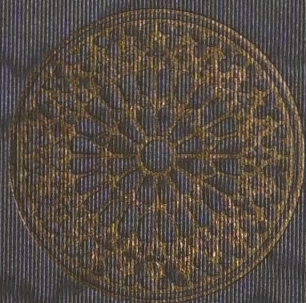


AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF A CATHEDRAL

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FRAMINGHAM, MASS.

**AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF
A CATHEDRAL ❧ ❧**

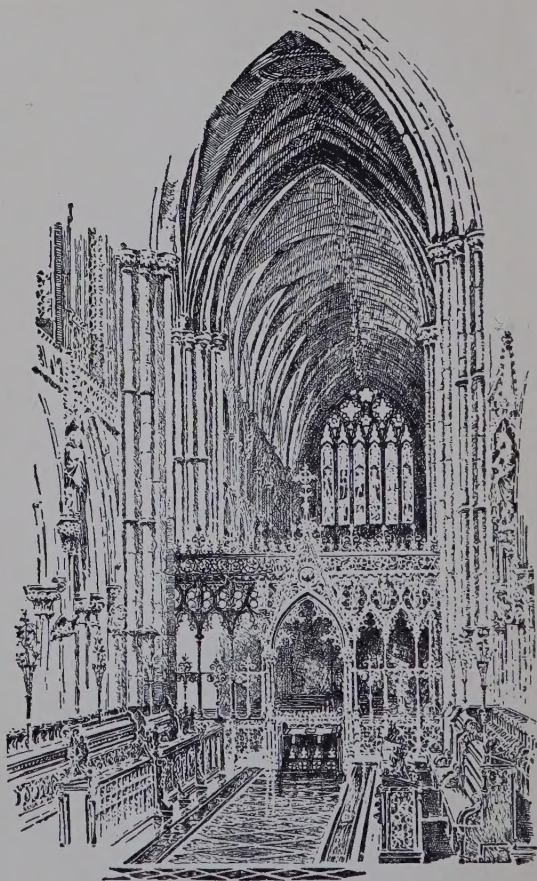
By Mr. Howland

DAY UNTO DAY

LIFE OF STEPHEN A. DOUGLAS

THE MIND OF JESUS

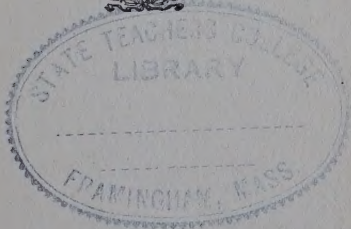
CASE AND COMMENT



AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF A CATHEDRAL ❧ ❧ ❧

Edited by Louis Howland

With decorations by Joseph Pennell



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To

ALL WHO HAVE WORSHIPED, ARE WORSHIPING,
AND IN THE AGES TO COME SHALL WORSHIP WITH-
IN MY WALLS, AND AT MY ALTAR, THIS AUTOBI-
OGRAPHY IS DEDICATED WITH THE AFFECTION OF

THE CATHEDRAL

INTRODUCTORY



HAVE noticed that autobiographies are frequently written in response to the suggestion of some friend that “you really ought to write the story of your life.” There are few whose vanity is not touched—few who are not flattered into acquiescence. I am not less vain than others. My life has been interesting to me. Yet it would never have occurred to me to write what I have written had I not—perhaps yielding to weakness—been convinced by a friend that I “ought to do so.” I have no excuses or apologies to make. I shall not disclose the name of my prompting friend, for the effect might be greatly embarrassing to

INTRODUCTORY

him. My hope is that he will be pleased, and that, when he reads the record—if he ever does—he will feel that his judgment is vindicated. Perhaps my editor could, without self-betrayal, throw some light on the mystery. But the responsibility is mine, and I have no desire to evade it. With a kindly greeting to all possible readers I bring the introductory ceremony to a close.

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AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF A CATHEDRAL

CHAPTER I

EARLY RECOLLECTIONS



UTOBIOGRAPHIES, I am told, are seldom true, and I do not know that a cathedral can reasonably be expected to adhere more

closely than others to the truth. I do not mean to say that there is often any conscious deviation from the right line—any conscious lying, in other words. But there are always two temptations to be faced, and they are most warping in their effects. One lures to self-exaltation, and the other to self-depreciation. The latter is often a form

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of self-exaltation through an exaggeration of one's wickedness, as though it were something to be proud of—such was the case of the great Italian, Cellini. But I feel that there are some things in my life worth setting down. They may be interesting to some, amusing to others, and possibly instructive to a few.

One of the most remarkable facts in my career is that I have had two bodies. Of the first of them it cannot be said that it was ever born—as a cathedral. It was an old and very humble parish church which was moved from one site to another, becoming a cathedral by adoption. My career began about forty years ago. I never had a “long-drawn aisle,” or “fretted vault,” or windows “richly dight,” and of “dim religious light” I was guiltless. I bore in those early days a very strong resemblance to the Englishman's cottage of which the great Chatham said: “It may be frail; its roof may shake; the wind may blow

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through it; the storms may enter, the rain may enter—but the King of England may not enter.” The King of England never tried to enter my precincts, but the wind and the rain often did, and with some degree of success—certainly the cold did, and the heat. I can also claim kinship in my early days with the chapel so graphically described by Browning in his poem “Christmas Eve.” I have often wondered what my glorious and stately brothers—or sisters—Durham, Lincoln, or Wells, would have thought of me could they ever have seen me. Probably they would have asked: “If this is a cathedral, what are we?”

Two other qualities, in addition to the ugliness and meanness of my early days, are, or have been mine, though not so often found in other members of my family—youth and unfixedness. As I have said, I date back not more than forty years. The ramshackle wooden structure was moved once before it became “me.” As a cathe-

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dral I was again moved—a short distance this time—and raised sufficiently to permit the construction of a basement under the building. Finally my outward frame was torn down, and I was housed—on still another site—in a new building that ought to last for ages, and that, when completed, will be beautiful. I feel a sense of rest and permanence that I have never till now felt, being no longer a cathedral on wheels. Naturally I am disposed to be humble, especially as I have been through some humiliating experiences.

One of them I shall never forget. There had been a meeting called for a certain night which turned out to be damp and rainy. A few half-drenched people, with dripping umbrellas, were gathered in my rather sodden—on that night—parish room, or perhaps I should say chapter-house. One of the soppiest of those present asked: “What are we to do?” The answer came promptly: “Mildew.” Rather insult-

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ing it seemed to me, and yet I could not help laughing. On another occasion, a very cold Sunday morning, the small congregation had gathered in the chapter-house. Then it was decided that the church was far too cold to permit the holding of service. A sprightly young woman asked: "Do we get rain-checks?" It is curious how such things stick in the memory, but is it not true that trifles often make the deepest and most lasting impression? "Mildew" and "rain-checks" seem to be part of my innermost life.

I have always been a good deal of a Darwinian, having known much of the struggle for existence, which has often been severe. If I have survived, as I have, the fact must, according to Darwin and Spencer, be proof of a certain degree of fitness. The struggle, I may say, is not over—perhaps it is necessary, in order to add to such fitness as I may have acquired. It is the testimony of those who know me best that

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I have always been more generous to others than to myself. That certainly is not the rule with parish churches. Is it true of other cathedrals? I cannot answer the question, and am content to ask it. But I have often been curious. I try not to think of myself as an "example," for that way hypocrisy lies, but I have many times been held up as such. So little am I disposed to obtrude myself on the community that I long since dispensed with my bell, which in truth was a poor thing. Often I do not appear in the church notices. Whether I am too poor to pay the price I do not know. I prefer to think that the omission is due to my shrinking modesty.

The offerings, as the alms basins show, are sometimes liberal, and at others almost imperceptible. I recall one old lady, now with God, who, when the plate was presented to her by a somewhat persistent official, after having made a diligent search, apologized very audibly for her in-

EARLY RECOLLECTIONS

ability to contribute, saying: "I left my purse at home." Another member of the congregation once "made change," taking from the plate the amount necessary to reduce the amount he had put on the plate to the amount he had intended to give. I am quite sure that in no other cathedral was a sermon ever judged and condemned by a dog. The animal came into the church,—he was in a sense an official or cathedral dog—and curled himself up at the base of the pulpit, behaving not only with propriety but dignity. Early in the sermon he rose, stretched himself, yawned, and walked solemnly down the aisle, which, as has been remarked, was not "long-drawn," and out into the great out-doors. I thought of the text "without are dogs."

I have, of course, known many clergy, including the three bishops—two of whom are dead—who have guided my destinies. Many clergymen and some bishops not connected with my organization I have also

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known. One of the earliest of my staff had a habit, when preaching, of turning half-way round, facing neither congregation nor choir. An irreverent member of my flock said of him: "I bet there is not another church in the world that has a preacher who preaches on the bias." A visiting parson on his way into town noted a good many saloons—it was before the Volstead days—on the windows of which were such inscriptions as "Bob's Place," "Dick's Place," etc. Noting the smallness of my congregation, the preacher said in his sermon—or in his pre-sermon remarks—that he wondered whether congregations would not be larger if churches were known as "William's Place," or "Henry's Place." Recalling the Rt. Rev. John Still, sometime bishop of Bath and Wells, and the alcoholic and bibulous verses attributed to him, I could not but wonder whether men patronized saloons because of what was on the windows rather than for what they could get inside. No

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church, as far as I know, has followed the brother's suggestion. My experience has taught me that what counts, and what draws people, is what the church gives, and not what it holds itself out to be, or the description it gives of itself. I never think of myself as a "place," but rather as a condition or spiritual state. But I give the man's suggestion as one of the curiosities of sermonology. For years I have treasured it in my memory.

Speaking with that modesty, humility and reverence which I should like to think of as belonging to me, I must say that I have had some experience with queer sermons, as that of the man who traced the Cross back to the motion made by the Jews of old in striking blood on the lintel and side posts of the door. One preacher there was with a very pronounced lisp, reinforced by a painful stammer, but of him I say nothing, since he was not responsible for his infirmity. It did, however, seem to me

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that he was "mis-cast." Good sermons, too, I have often heard, and many of them. At a service held as a memorial to one of my dead bishops, the preacher was the later Bishop Hugh Miller Thompson, who, I suppose, could not, even if he had tried, have preached a poor sermon. So of the late Bishop Tuttle, to whose resonant voice my walls have several times resounded. I recall with pleasure and pride the sermons of Bishops Hall, Parker, Greer, Woodcock, Vincent, Osborne, Reese, White and Francis. Of deans, very curiously, since I am a cathedral, I know very little, as I have been served for the most part by a priest-in-charge or a vicar. In spite of some unfortunate experiences, I am disposed to think rather well of the clergy, though with serious reservations.

Certainly they are often blamed for what are really the faults of the people. As for bishops, they have my keenest sympathy,

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for they are the victims of ignorant, gossipy, and even malicious—sometimes lying—criticism. Blame for everything that goes wrong is laid on their shoulders. The injustice with which they are treated has often made my wooden or brick walls quiver with what in any one else than a cathedral would be rage. Archdeacons I have known, some of them funny, and some—one in particular—I honor as devout and consecrated servants of God. One archdeacon I recall who was visibly annoyed because no archdiaconal table had been provided for him at a diocesan convention. I did not know what an archdiaconal table was, and am not sure that I know now, but it must have been an important bit of furniture.

This reminds me that something should be said of diocesan conventions, or councils, as we now call them. Two in particular live in my memory, both special and both for the election of a bishop. The first

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was not without heat. There were many candidates, including three priests resident in the diocese, and many ballots, in the neighborhood of forty, as I remember. Of the results of neither do I speak. But I must say that in neither did the delegates appear to be conscious of divine guidance, or greatly to rely on it. One delegate, I remember, was deeply interested in the election of a man whom he had never seen, and of whom he had but the slightest knowledge. His nominating speech went very well till it became necessary to take the convention into his confidence as to the name of his candidate, when the orator turned to a member of his family sitting beside him, and, in a heavy stage whisper that was heard from narthex to apse, asked: "What's the man's name?" He then proceeded smoothly, and apparently without embarrassment, to his peroration. His candidate was not chosen, though later he be-

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came bishop in another jurisdiction. This is the only lapse of the kind of which I have any recollection. Its uniqueness, I feel, entitles it to a place in this record.

CHAPTER II

MY EDUCATION



WHILE a cathedral, it seems to me, should be clothed with a certain solemnity, and stir solemn thoughts in the minds of all within the sphere of its influence, it is neither necessary nor desirable that it should be so swathed in dignity as to be insulated against what is odd, or even funny. My kinsmen beyond seas have their gargoyles, and the great cathedral rising on Morningside Heights is to have its "sports bay," and and also its "writers' bay," which latter may turn out to be pretty much of a joke. We represent, embody and enshrine life in all its aspects, and life surely has its amus-

MY EDUCATION

ing side. From this we cannot turn away without exposing ourselves to the grave peril of becoming pompous, patronizing and professionally pious. From all of which "Good Lord, deliver us." We should speak of the joys and sorrows, the trials and triumphs, the folly and wisdom (though there is not much of the latter), the hopes and despairs, the work and the play, the business and the worship, the virtue and (in a way) the wickedness of mankind. What must have been seen, and smiled, and perhaps grinned over by a cathedral a thousand years old!

Young as I am, I have lived through two wars, that with Spain and the World War. Small as I am I was represented in both—in the World War by my bishop who served as chaplain. One of my most cherished possessions is my service flag, with its one gold star, that hangs from the chancel arch, balanced by the national flag on the epistle side. I like to think of myself as standing

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for a sound and sober patriotism that shows itself in service and sacrifice, and is quite unrelated to "100 per cent. Americanism."

I wish I could get it into the minds of those who worship within my walls, and of all others, that, if it is their duty to love their enemies—as it is—it is a frightful sin to hate their neighbors and fellow-citizens because they belong to a certain church, come from a certain bit of territory known as a nation, or have dark skins. I take pride in the fact that I have been served by a former Lutheran, have Roman Catholics in my congregation, and have seen my pulpit occupied by a negro priest. It may be that I have served as a center of unity, in however small and humble a way.

In church unity, so-called, I have never been greatly interested. But my constant prayer—for cathedrals do pray—is for that divine unity among men which is based on and grows out of good sense, good feeling, Christian charity, and divine love. The

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brotherhood of man is to me no mere catch phrase or slogan, but a profound truth and a gleaming ideal. So in the midst of wars, and controversies that have raged and swirled around me, I have endeavored to stand for peace and good will, that peace and good will that were promised to a weary world on the first Christmas Eve. I am "small and of no reputation," but so was the army of Gideon, and also that of Leonidas. "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts." It was by that divine Spirit that the lone—and lonely—prophet was enabled to rout his enemies. It has been said, and I suppose it is true, that a cathedral should have no congregation, but should be a church for anybody and everybody—in truth "for all people." Measured by this test it has sometimes seemed to me that there were few cathedrals that approached more nearly than I to this ideal of what a cathedral should be, so "thinly sown with wor-

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shippers" have I sometimes been. But cathedrals are themselves worshipers, and are so absorbed in the glory of service and worship as to be indifferent to the size of the congregation—indifferent, that is, except for the feeling of regret at the loss which the absentees sustain.

Those who stay at home Sunday after Sunday, or devote the day to golf or motor-ing, do not, I have always thought, so much fail to perform a religious duty, as cut themselves off from a spiritual benefit, and turn their backs on those influences which operate so powerfully for the enrichment of the human soul. If I could speak with a human voice to my children I would say: "Come worship with me as a fellow-adorer of the divine love." I think that I may reasonably claim a certain loyalty to myself, and certainly a loyalty through me to the great Head of the church. "Is it"—or am I—"nothing to you, all ye that pass by?" Sometimes it seems so. But a cathedral

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must of necessity be hopeful and optimistic, must trust in men as well as in God. I myself am a memorial, not only to bishops and clergy, but to all those "who, having finished their course in faith, do now rest from their labors." If there were faithful ones in the past, as there were, so there are to-day, men and women who are still in their pilgrimage.

Of these too I shall speak to generations yet unborn. I dare not disbelieve in that humanity which I am laboring to leaven, and am so eager to uplift and inspire. If men and women are frivolous, so am I, as I have already shown, and shall perhaps show again. We are, I imagine, related through our weakness rather than our strength. Yet I am convinced that much of what passes for, and is counted as frivolity, really is not that in any bad sense. I have great sympathy with the much-talked-of younger generation, especially with the youngest members thereof. For my favorite

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service is that of infant baptism, particularly when it takes place on a radiant Easter Eve. It would be a kind of sacrilege even to attempt to describe it, and so I refrain. To me it is tenderly impressive. Surely it is beautiful—the thought of a baby being enlisted as “Christ’s faithful soldier and servant unto his life’s end.” It always makes me think of the feast of St. Michael and All Angels with its selections of Scripture in which little children and the great Archangel are ranked equally as servants of the divine love. The term of enlistment of the baby soldiers may be long or short—which in any case would be the happier fate?

Looking out on the world I see many young people who, if baptized, were pledged to brave warfare and faithful service, and yet seem to be neither fighting for God nor serving God’s truth. Is the trouble with parents and sponsors, or is there after all something wrong with the younger generation? A little of both I should say. Every

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Easter Eve, and on other occasions when baptism is administered, I wonder what will be the future lives of those presented at the font. Will they "lead the rest of their life according to this beginning"? There is something saddening in such reflections and questionings, but I at least, being what I am, cannot escape them. I seem to note a growing indifference to church and religion, an indifference that is worse than opposition, of which latter there is little or none. Religion is rather a thing apart. Young people marry, and create a home—which may or may not (often not) be blessed with children—in which religion has no place, is not even mentioned. They do not seem to have any idea that such a thing exists. I would not classify them with the ungodly man, of whom the Psalmist said: "Neither is God in all his thoughts." Yet there are many of whom this may and must be said—not that they are ungodly, but rather God-less.

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So I am disposed to pity the younger generation, as Christ must have pitied the rich young man who "went away sorrowful." Probably my pity would be rejected, if not scorned by those to whom it goes out, but that is the way I feel. I am convinced that I now have some qualities—and I would not be thought boastful—which are sadly needed in the life of our time—steadiness, staunchness and stability, now that my roving days are over. For countless ages my brethren—and I hope and pray that I too may do so—have borne steadfast witness to the faith, and been a rebuke to human fickleness. I cannot, being what I am, help asking myself whether the babies I have seen baptized will be faithful to their vows, and whether those young people who are apparently faithless have ever been baptized, and, if they have, whether they are without any sense of obligation. These are some of the reasons why the baptismal

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service is to me, not only beautiful and touching, but exceedingly solemn. I always join heartily and devoutly in the hope expressed in the exhortation that the children “may be virtuously brought up to lead a godly and a Christian life; remembering always, that baptism doth represent unto us our profession; which is, to follow the example of our Saviour Christ, and to be made like unto Him; that, as He died, and rose again for us, so should we, who are baptized, die from sin, and rise again unto righteousness; continually mortifying all our evil and corrupt affections, and daily proceeding in all virtue and godliness of living.”

Sponsors and parents should read and re-read that exhortation, and examine their consciences in the light of it. It is not possible to exaggerate the debt which the younger generation owes, not only to itself, but to the youngest generation, which will,

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before we realize it, have charge of the affairs of the world, which are daily becoming more complicated and puzzling. I have often thought of a parable that was suggested to me by one who said that the old cathedrals seem to be a part of the landscape, not in any merely æsthetic sense, but as natural features, such as trees, rocks, hills and rivers—to have grown out of the soil, as they are rooted in it, and always seem to have been where they are. Perhaps that may be true of me. Such is my hope. It is, as I have said, a parable showing, not only the relation of religion to life, but also that it is natural to and in life, a natural part of it. The ultra orthodox shrink from the thought or idea of “natural religion,” but surely they will agree that religion itself should be natural, as life is, and a part of nature, as I have been told Canterbury seems to be. Mr. Lowell wrote thus of Chartres:

MY EDUCATION

Looking up suddenly, I found mine eyes
Confronted with the minster's vast repose,
Silent and gray as forest-leaguered cliff
Left inland by the ocean's slow retreat.

A "cliff"—why not the rock of ages? I always think of the great cathedrals as natural formations into the building of which went something more than the human hand. Unlike the "cliff," they are not stern and forbidding, but hospitable, protecting, sheltering, true havens of refuge. Of this mighty company I am perhaps the humblest member, and am deeply conscious of my insignificance. But cathedrals may aspire, as they preach aspiration to others. To do this is both a privilege and a duty. As I grow in age I have faith to believe that I shall grow in power, and more and more be a neighbor "to them that are far-off and to them that are nigh," and even to the most indifferent and careless passers-by. Such are some of my ambitions, and they seem

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to me to be worthy. I should be a neighbor both to him "who fell among thieves," and also to the thieves themselves. Of my attitude toward the priest and levite who "passed by on the other side" I am by no means so sure. But it may be that charity is due even to them.

CHAPTER III

LAUGHTER AND TEARS



I HAVE had my dissensions, and even quarrels, mostly over ritual, and some of them were exceedingly bitter. But as they have been forgotten, and those who were parties to them are now the best of friends, it seems profitless and even heartless more than merely to refer to them. They cannot be passed over wholly, for they are a part of my history. I like to believe—I do believe—that even in connection with these, my influence has been on the side of peace, charity and forbearance. Certainly I have endeavored to stand for inclusiveness and comprehensiveness—that is,

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for true catholicity. Much that calls itself catholicity and passes for it, does not seem to me to be that. Moderation, I know, is not highly or generally esteemed, yet I have striven to cultivate it. I am not scholar enough to know whether St. Paul used the word in its present accepted sense when he said: "Let your moderation be known unto all men." The text is one of my favorites. I have never been able to understand why men should be so sure—so fightingly and persecutingly sure—of things of which they knew and could know nothing.

It was not one of my fellowship who asked: "Why so hot, my little sir?" In the presence of the mysteries of the gospel, and indeed of the daily life of man, one should be humble, even self-distrustful, and perhaps should not talk overmuch of "the faith." Thinking thus, the words of the Almighty, spoken to Job, are often in my mind: "Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge? Gird up now

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thy loins like a man; for I will demand of thee, and answer thou me. Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? declare, if thou hast understanding. Who hath laid the measures thereof, if thou knowest, or who hath stretched the line upon it? Whereupon are the foundations thereof fastened? or who hath laid the cornerstone thereof; when the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy?" Thus Jehovah spoke to His servant—perhaps He is still speaking in similar fashion. If men would only hear Him!

Sinner though I am, there are some sins of which I have never been guilty. Never have I spoken of children as "kiddies," or of a boy as "Junior," or of any man's wife as his "better half" or "better three-fourths." Nor have I ever spoken evil of dignitaries—church or other—though I have had many provocations. I am even able to think without bitterness of my great

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rivals, the motor car, the moving picture, golf and sports generally. It has never occurred to me to call on the state to protect me against them. Even of those strange revivals conducted by children in their early teens and under, I have said with Gamaliel: "If this counsel or this work be of men, it will come to naught: but if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it; lest haply ye be found even to fight against God." I have had, and still have—and they are growing stronger—my doubts as to whether the work was "of God," but I have kept them to myself, in the hope that some good might come from what I could not in my heart approve. But we—even cathedrals—may have our likes and preferences, nor should we be judged harshly if we are not wholly without prejudices. Also one may have opinions, I hope, without being opinionated.

I have said that a certain sort of frivolity is not a bad thing, and have admitted that I myself have a streak of it, as every per-

LAUGHTER AND TEARS

son has who has never found it necessary, as the phrase is, "to stand on his dignity." The dignity on which a man "stands" is a poor thing, hardly distinguishable from self-consciousness. What men need is to be God-conscious. A great English writer—I may as well say it was George Meredith—said that he would have a "hearty God," one supposedly capable of laughter. How one can go through a Zoo, and gaze on the marvelously curious animals, and the freakish birds, and fishes (if there is an aquarium attached), without feeling that the creative intelligence is endowed with a sense of humor I cannot understand. A "laughing God"—why not? And why not a laughing cathedral? Hugh Walpole in one of his books portrays a cathedral that seems to scowl at the town clustered about its base, to shadow it with a dark cloud, and to be almost ominous in its aspect. One can hardly help thinking of it as an oppressive, if not an evil influence. Certainly it is im-

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possible to conceive of it as laughing. Yet, I say again, why not? "Rejoice with them that do rejoice," says St. Paul, "and weep with them that weep." I have ever striven to enter into the joys as well as the sorrows of my people, and, as I have said, to be neighborly to them. It may be that the fact that there is nothing majestic about me makes it easier for me to be human.

Jesus Christ was tenderly and touchingly human. That He laughed who can doubt? Surely He never scowled. I doubt whether any cathedral ever did, and so I question the accuracy of Mr. Walpole's portrait. We are told that "the valleys also shall stand so thick with corn, that they shall laugh and sing." My choir often sings: "O be joyful in the Lord, all ye lands; serve the Lord with gladness, and come before His presence with a song." Yet the so-called "cheerful Christian" is rather an offense to me, the one with the professional smile—

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or smirk—who has no sense of the dignity and even solemnity of life, and who shrinks from the contemplation of either under that aspect. There is of course “the laughter of fools” which is “as the crackling of thorns under a pot,” laughter that is silly, inane and vapid. The distinction here, as everywhere, between the true and the false, the real and the unreal, is clear enough. I shall continue to laugh when there is anything to laugh at—to laugh with my people, and perhaps sometimes at them, though always in the kindest spirit. There is such a thing as a laughing philosophy, as there was a laughing philosopher. Of Shakespeare it has been said:

“—oh, eyes sublime

With tears and laughter for all time.”

In truth the two, tears and laughter, are never far apart. There were two of my people, long since dead, with whom, but never at whom, I many times chuckled.

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The man was a fine checker and chess player, a good deal more than a match for his bishop, with whom he waged many a contest. As is usually the case with men of this type, he was a genial soul, a lover and teller of good stories, and blessed with a keen yet kindly sense of humor. His jokes were all the better because of his own manifest delight in them. His mind was, too, richly stored with poetry, and his custom was to recite a poem or stanza to his wife at every Sunday breakfast, they two being the only partakers of the meal, though I suppose they had an occasional guest. I have often heard people say of such and such a one that he had "a sunshiny nature"—such surely was the nature of my old friend and his wife. She it was who shot out the word "Mildew" at the sloppy meeting in the chapter-house, of which I have already spoken. I do not suppose they knew it, but it is none the less true that I always felt that our relations were sympathetic, and

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that the bond between us was exceedingly close.

For both, my admiration and respect were unbounded. Their path through life had not been smooth or easy, but they trod it, not merely uncomplainingly, but with a high-hearted gallantry, each being sufficient for the other, and both agreeing with St. Paul, who said: "Our sufficiency is of God." When I hear people sneering at marriage, and despairing because of the many divorces, I always think of this man and his wife, whose "bonds of wedlock" seemed to become more and more closely welded as they approached the end of life's journey. They were a laughing pair, as I have said, and I should have been a churl if I had not more than once laughed with them. But laughter at them would have been "as the crackling of thorns under a pot." I am glad to give them an honored place in these memoirs, which, poor as they may be, would be vastly poorer with them left out.

CHAPTER IV

MEDIÆVALISM AND MODERNISM



HAVE spoken of what seems to me to be the beauty of baptismal service. With what I trust may be the proper degree of humility I must say that the penitential office is the service that I least like. It is far too servile, and even groveling—at least so it seems to me. I am in truth almost shocked when I hear the minister, as representative of the people, pray thus: “Enter not into judgment with thy servants, who are vile earth, and miserable sinners; but so turn thine anger from us who meekly acknowledge our vileness,” and so on. I do not think that men are “vile earth,” or, if they are

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“earth,” that that earth is “vile.” When my people “meekly acknowledge their vileness,” they acknowledge, I think, what is not theirs. They, as I know them, and I know them pretty well, are godly folk, clean-living, having some consciousness of the presence of God. Good citizens, good neighbors, good husbands and wives—vile is precisely what they are not. No one in his senses would dream of applying such an adjective to my chess-playing friend or his wife.

Nor is humanity as a whole vile even in the eyes of divine perfection. Indeed the old hymn “From Greenland’s Icy Mountains”—of which I am fond—has of late been subjected to severe, and as I think deserved, criticism, directed against the words “and only man is vile,” as applied to the people of Ceylon. I have often heard it said that certain people are “the salt of the earth,” indeed Jesus Christ spoke thus of those to whom the Sermon

on the Mount was preached. In one of the prayers in the burial service I—along with my people—thank God for “the wonderful grace and virtue declared in all thy saints, who have been the choice vessels of thy grace, and the lights of the world in their several generations.” Yet all these were men and women, and, if present in church when the penitential office was used, would “meekly acknowledge their vileness.” Surely the vessels of God’s grace, and “the lights of the world” never were “vile.” The words must be used conventionally and mechanically, for I gladly acquit those who use them of hypocrisy. Nor does it seem to me that the use of the word “vile” in this way is Scriptural. In the Bible men are spoken of as becoming vile, or being made vile, and there are references to this or that vile person, and to “this vile body.”

But I can find no precedent for the confession of villainy by a whole Christian

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congregation. Doubtless there is in it all a touch of mediævalism, a sort of survival from the days when there was a good deal of groveling in the presence of a supposedly angry God, or perhaps from those earlier times when—as by the saints—the body was despised. Something of the same spirit is still shown in certain lands by men and women who climb on their hands and knees to a shrine up a long flight of steps. There is a good deal of paganism, and even savagery, in this view of the relation of man to God. Job was nearer right when he heard the voice of God after this fashion: “Gird up now thy loins like a man.” When Cornelius fell down at the feet of St. Peter, and would have worshiped him, the apostle said: “Stand up; I myself also am a man.” There is a certain dignity that should be observed in worship.

I suppose I am a strange combination, for though I am in sympathy with the modern and progressive spirit and have

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little patience with obscurantism—am indeed a modernist—I see much in mediævalism that seems to me wholly admirable. Probably it is part of the cathedral tradition in which, though a mere infant, I am proud to share. I know that there are some people who sneer at the Middle Ages, as there are others who shrink from the rather grim way in which people of those times dealt with the realities of life, death among them. My burial service has recently been revised, the idea being to make it less “gloomy,” and to free it of its mediæval spirit. Yet generations of men have been deeply impressed by its power and majesty—and solemnity. Happily it has not been seriously marred. I am now thinking of the spirit that seems to have prompted the changes, the same spirit that was shocked by the last clause—which has been eliminated—in the prayer for the sick: “Or else give him grace so to take thy visitation that after this painful life ended, he may

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dwell with thee in life everlasting; through Jesus Christ our Lord."

To me that has always seemed the most important part of the prayer. I never have been able to understand the objection to it unless it is that it suggests a doubt of God's willingness to heal. But surely there should be a doubt, for it is quite possible that healing may not always be the best. Pope writes of one as "cursed with every granted prayer." There may also be the thought that the mere suggestion—and these are wonderful days for suggestion—of death might have a bad effect on the sick person, and an unwillingness to regard death as a divine visitation. What the user of the prayer does—or did—is to leave the issue to God, to trust the decision to Him, and to ask Him, whatever it is, to care for the sick person both in life and death. The prayer is answered by the divine mercy whether life or death be granted by God.

At bottom I see in it all a shrinking from

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death and the thought of it—a shrinking indeed from plain truth speaking. I see much that is good and heroic in mediævalism. But evil I see too, and much of it—superstition, ignorance, fear, oppression and robbery of the poor, the horrors with which death was surrounded, to say nothing of bigotry and persecution. I have none of the illusions, for such I believe them to be, about the Middle Ages, the Thirteenth Century in particular, out of which Chesterton and Belloc have attempted to rebuild history. Though I reverence the past, would maintain unbroken my connection with it, and draw all the power that undoubtedly flows from it, I would live in the present, and serve to the best of my ability the men and women of my own day, and the children too. I would be a contemporary of them as well as a neighbor to them. Nor does there seem to me to be any inconsistency between the two attitudes and points of view. Chartres cathedral is a living force—

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and is modern—yet it has its roots in the remote past, and from that past it derives nourishment. As it was promised that “the remnant that is escaped of the house of Judah shall again take root downward, and bear fruit upward,” so a cathedral should “take root” backward, and “bear fruit” in the present and for the distant future.

I have said that there is in me a streak of frivolity, and it is in part through that that I feel my relation to the great cathedrals of Europe, which certainly witnessed many scenes that were in the highest degree frivolous. There is also, I fear, in me, as in them, a worldly and practical streak, which I hope to narrow. I once heard a preacher quote from a poem supposed to express the faith and philosophy of a certain worldly, semi-skeptical bishop, thus:

The common problem, yours, mine, every one's,
Is—not to fancy what were fair in life

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Provided it could be—but, finding first
What may be, then find how to make it fair
Up to our means; a very different thing!

That seemed to me to be good sense. To deal with a man as he is for the purpose of making him what he ought to be—such is my task. The danger is that when we try to find out “what may be” in order to make it fair, we may set limits to the possibility of improvement, whereas there are none. Ideals there must be, and they must be high. The one for which I stand has never been reached, but that is not to say that it never will be. Nevertheless the bishop in the poem spoke wisely.

My work must be done on earth and among men, and it is my business and calling to make both as “fair” as it is possible for me to do and for them to become. If that is worldliness—and it may easily develop into worldliness—I fear that I must confess that to that extent I am worldly. It

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is in this world, as long as men are in the flesh, that the divine presence must be experienced—this world that must be redeemed. Who knows, thinking of men and women, “what may be,” except God Himself? Possibly my practicality will not be held against me as long as I feel, and am conscious of, “Thy Cross before to guide me.” This earth is very dear to me—especially as I am made out of it—and I can readily understand why people should be reluctant to leave it. For it is very lovely, and God’s handiwork. As for me, I shall never leave it, for earth is the only home I shall ever know. I may live a thousand years or so, but immortality does not attach to stone, brick, wood, or glass, and therefore cannot be my portion.

Yet I have a life apart from the outward and material framework which men think of as “me.” But whatever it is,—life, soul, spirit—it must ever abide with me and in the material building if that

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building is to continue to be a cathedral, which I have spoken of as a state of mind or soul, rather than a mere place. What happens to the inner life of a cathedral—and I have been through this experience—when its physical vesture falls into ruins I often wonder. It is enough to know that I am continuously contemporary with the swiftly passing generations, and, though men and women die and live again, I, as far as I can see, will never cease to live. I have no desire to speculate on the subject, and indeed have no talent for that sort of thing. The difference between my people and me—or rather one of the many differences—is that they must leave the earth though they would like to stay, while I must stay though at times I feel as though I should like to depart. Mere duration in time must eventually become wearisome. A young woman of my flock once said that she did not care for immortality if it simply meant “living on.”

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But I am happily content, for my life is interesting, and I try to make it useful. One great pleasure will be increasingly mine as the years rush by—the pleasure derived from the exercise of memory, one of the divinest faculties. When the English king was a few years ago crowned in Westminster Abbey, the Abbey must have said to itself: “I saw all this a thousand years ago. Particularly do I recall the crowning of Elizabeth, and the joy that went with it, and the lift of England’s spirit that followed it. Ah me, it seems only yesterday!” A cathedral that lived through the Wars of the Roses, had some experience with the “reign of the saints,” in Seventeenth century England, and that, to go no further back, was at least in full vigor when Magna Charta was born—how overwhelmingly rich its life must be! The past is ever present, and the present becomes the past almost, it sometimes seems, instantaneously. I myself have a very real consciousness of

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being in the future—while it is still future. That is a very queer experience, but it has been mine. In my case it has often happened that “in to-day already walks to-morrow.” Mediævalism and Modernism may even now be reacting, or interacting one on the other. I should like to make this a little clearer, if I can.

A dean—not one of my deans—was not long ago reported to have said: “It is not surprising that the whole religious world is in a state of turmoil. It will continue. We are in a period of transition from authority to experience”—that is, from mediævalism to modernism. The reporter of the statement is the Rev. Herbert Parrish, writing in the *Atlantic Monthly*. My opinion, as a cathedral, is that in such a transition we are moving in the right direction, and toward the only true goal. I cannot see that men ever—even in what are called the ages of faith—relied wholly on authority, and am convinced that the more nearly they

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came to doing so the worse off they were. For religion that is not experienced is worth little, and of necessity has little effect on life and character. And religion that does not affect life and character, and for good, is nothing more than magic or superstition.

I have for many years watched my people as they heard read—and wondered if they thrilled to them, as I always did—the following words: “Philip findeth Nathanael, and saith unto him, we found Him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph. And Nathanael said unto him, Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth? Philip saith unto him, Come and see.” When Nathanael did see, he said: “Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel.” He *saw* what Jesus was, experienced His power—and he believed. Nothing, as I have learned, can take the place of personal contact with the deep

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truths of Christianity and with its Founder—one cannot truly believe till one experiences. As far as authority is concerned, the ultimate human authority must always be, as it has ever been, human experience.

I am convinced, therefore, that the anonymous dean was right, and that he expressed, not only a great, but a most cheering and inspiring, truth. No creed can be true to the man who has not experienced it, nor can all the decisions of all the Councils, from Nicæa down, make it true to him. I am not surprised or terrified to learn that “the whole religious world is in a state of turmoil.” There never was, as I am told, a time when it was not. There never was an age that was not one of transition. It always makes me smile when I hear some one, with a great show of wisdom, attempt to account for present conditions by saying that, “we are living in a transition period.” So were Adam and Eve, and so it has been with their descendants ever

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since. It seems to me that religion has been most alive in those times when there was the most "turmoil," and that its vitality diminished in almost exact proportion to the depth of the religious peace that had settled over the world. There is, of course, a peace which Christianity brings, but it is not the peace of indifference or repose, but rather the peace of conquest, of the assurance derived from experience.

Always the question is, not whether the period is one of transition, but the three-fold one of "whence," "where we are now," and "whither." So the dean did not say that we are moving, as of course we are, but are moving "from authority to experience." That is something worth saying, and also it happens to be true. The human race has never "settled down." It has always been on the march, physically, morally, intellectually and spiritually. The fact that the march has sometimes been a retreat does not make it any the less a march. The tran-

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sition may be from better to worse, as well as from worse to better. So there is to me nothing alarming in "the turmoil" in "the religious world" of my time—it is as nothing compared to that which swirled about Jesus Christ during the days of His earthly ministry. Nor was there ever such another "transition"—and it was from authority to experience, as in the case of Nathanael. I am only concerned now to make it clear that the church and religion are facing nothing new, and that there is no reason to be disturbed. Cathedrals may be static—though I have moved three times!—but religion, which is life, is not, and never can be. So mediævalism was always becoming modernism, and modernism is in its turn becoming—what? Life is, always has been, and, as far as I at least can see, ever will be, a question.

CHAPTER V

SERMONS—LONG AND SHORT



SUPPOSE it is true that cathedrals cannot read. Yet through some process which I cannot explain, and which I myself do

not understand, I have been able to establish contact with contemporary thought and the thought of the ages. In this way I have “read” many biographies and autobiographies, and have observed that in all of them something is said of the literary tastes of the subjects of them, and of their favorite books and authors. So I think it well to follow the fashion. With a natural prejudice in favor of deans, it is perhaps not surprising that I should greatly admire Dr.

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John Donne, sometime dean of St. Paul's. I am not a critic, and so shall not attempt to tell why I like him. I know he was a good man, and a very wise one. Had he written but one line—"one might almost say her body thought"—it would have been enough to enshrine him in my heart, since the words point to the spiritualization of the material. He was one of a group—Walton, Wotton, Herbert, Falkland, and Evelyn—every member of which is dear to me, representing as they do the finest and noblest flowers of Anglicanism. Herbert I reverence for his deep culture, and his piety, which was natural, non-professional, and beautifully practical. No man was ever freer of worldly ambition, nor was any ever as happy as he in doing the humblest duties.

I have a natural bent toward the quaint, and even quizzical. Many a chuckle have I had over the admirable Burton—he of "The Anatomy of Melancholy"—whose

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bust is in Christ Church Cathedral at Oxford. Sir Thomas Browne, the hard-working physician of Norwich, who belongs to the Donne-Herbert group, I admire perhaps as much for his curious conceits as for his piety, or the sonorousness, dignity and even majesty of his style. It is strange what queer characters have been bred in the seclusion of the great English universities. I have mentioned one of them—Burton. Another is almost a contemporary of mine—the Rev. Charles Lutwidge Dodgson, better known as Lewis Carroll. Him too I delight in—the poetizer of mathematics. The reader may remember that I have confessed to a certain degree of frivolity, so he should not be surprised or shocked to learn that “Alice” is one of my heroines.

With theologians I have never been able to establish sympathetic relations, no doubt because I am not an expert in their science. Yet for the wisest of them I have an unfeigned respect. Nor do I enjoy the com-

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pany of those who affect to probe mysteries, who are all the while nourishing or fighting their doubts, or the doubts of others. Often these people seem to me to be very earnest over unimportant matters. Religion, as I conceive it, is natural, something to be taken as a matter of course, as life itself is. To labor as painfully as some do to acquire an absolutely correct faith I hold to be a waste of time, and also of effort which might be better directed to living by, and up to, such faith as one has. I have always felt that there was much truth in the tribute of Cowley to Crashaw:

His *faith*, perhaps, in some nice tenets might
Be wrong; his life, I'm sure, was in the right.

I am reminded of Matthew Arnold's definition of the Church of England as "a national society for the promotion of goodness." Could there be a nobler mission? Arnold, I may say here, whether considered as poet or essayist, is one of my favor-

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ite authors. Defective as his theology undoubtedly is, it is still true that his method of dealing with Scripture has now been generally accepted, except of course in Fundamentalist circles. He was a pioneer, and if his work had been followed up we should have escaped many of the heart-aches from which devout people are now suffering. Men were so fearful—as they still are—of “disturbing the faith” of the people that they have kept the truth from them, and the result is that what should have been an easy transition may now be a sharp break bringing distress to many, and perhaps a temporary loss of faith. If instead of wrangling men would, with Wotton, pray God “more of His grace than gifts to send,” they would find “rest unto their souls,” and also a firmer basis for their faith.

While a cathedral is not, I suppose, primarily a preaching place, but rather a place for worship, I have no sympathy

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whatever with those who think lightly of sermons, much less with those—and there are some such—who would abolish them altogether. For the sermon is, after all, a part of the worship, both of him who preaches, and those who hear it. It is an integral part of my liturgy, the whole service leading up to it, as it does also to the Eucharist. Provision is made for the sermon in the Eucharistic office itself. The church, I sometimes think, if it is to fulfil its divinely appointed mission, must be a preaching church—that, first of all. If clergymen could but realize the dignity and sacredness of the prophetic as well as the priestly office we could hardly fail to have better sermons. Christian ministers are messengers, heralds, speakers for God.

Of course I have my own notions about sermons. As I see it, a good sermon, well delivered, can hardly—within reasonable limits, of course—be too long, or a poor sermon too short. Some preachers I have

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been sorry to have stop. As to others, my wonder has been why they should ever have begun. Often, very often, I have marveled at the patience of the people, and while marveling have been reminded of the well-known lines of my hero, George Herbert:

The worst speak something good; if all want
sense,

God takes a text, and preacheth Pa-ti-ence.

But, as a rule, sermons, even the good ones, should be short. That was the opinion of a very beautiful little girl who, with a delegation of her schoolmates, used to attend my services. She was, I regret to say, coached by her bishop—and mine—to hold up her finger, so that both congregation and preacher could see the gesture, when she thought the sermon should come to an end. Docilely she followed the episcopal counsel, but, as I recall, quite without effect, since the preacher had not been instructed in the meaning of the signal. So he could

only wonder. I should add that the bishop told the child that on no account should the monition be given when he was the preacher. Such bishops, it has always seemed to me, are entitled to special honor.

The poorest sermon I ever heard was the shortest—not more than five minutes long. At least one-half of it was devoted to the recitation of a stanza of very indifferent poetry. I never felt that there was in this case any relation of cause and effect, and am sure that it was a mere coincidence that brevity and inferiority were associated. For in five minutes it is easily possible to pronounce from a thousand to twelve hundred words, and in that number of vocables much that is valuable and weighty can be said. Even the best long sermons—and good sermons are mostly long—would be the better for compression. The danger is that the sermon may be too much thought of by the preacher as a work of art—which in part it is—and as a result be over-

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refined, and so lose all freshness and spontaneity. And the preacher himself may become self-conscious. The worst sermons are those that are mere exhibitions of oratory.

It has always been my opinion that congregations are responsible for much poor preaching. St. Paul must have had this in mind when he wrote to Timothy thus: "Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine: but after their own lusts shall heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables." I always think of those words when I hear people fussing about the preacher's "delivery," his manner in the pulpit, his pronunciation, the quality of his voice, and especially when I am told—for I have had no experience with it—of a strange system of "trial sermons." There must be spiritual

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co-operation between preacher and people if the best results are to be gained. I feel very deeply on this subject, for am I not myself a preacher? Shakespeare found "sermons in stones"—why not in brick, I being brick?

Cathedrals of course set great store by precedents, and that being the case I cannot pass over an illustrious precedent against the long—or extremely long—sermon. I refer to St. Paul's experience at Troas. It is said that he "continued his speech until midnight," and, after an interruption of which something will be said later, "talked a long while, even till break of day." If this is not the record, it certainly approaches it. The incident that interrupted the apostle's discourse at midnight was the falling asleep of the young man Eutychus, which, for my present purpose, was more important than his fall from the window—which killed him—and his miraculous resuscitation by the preacher. The story is

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told in the book of the Acts of the Apostles with a charming and engaging naïveté: “There were many lights in the upper chamber, where they were gathered together. And there sat in a window a certain young man named Eutychus, being fallen into a deep sleep; and as Paul was long preaching, he sunk down with sleep, and fell down from the third loft, and was taken up dead.” I have many times thought that these words must have been comforting to preachers of all times. If St. Paul could not keep his congregation awake, St. Paul the mighty and militant apostle, on fire with his message, why should any of his successors be surprised or feel humiliated when people fall asleep under their ministrations?

There may have been others in that Troas congregation—no doubt there were—who were unable to keep awake, but who did not fall out of the window and become the subject of a miracle. The whole incident is a

powerful argument against long sermons—at least sermons that are too long. I confess that I have always been curious about Eutychus, and should like to have known him—to have talked with him. Nothing is known beyond the fact that he was a heavy sleeper, even in church. Clearly he belonged to “the younger generation,” and he may have thought that the apostle’s doctrine of obedience—of wives to husbands, children to parents, citizens to state—was a bit old-fogyish. I have seen an occasional spiritual descendant of Eutychus in my congregation—happily there are no third-loft windows from which to fall. But I must in justice say that my people are extraordinarily good listeners, though they have been subjected to no such test as the Troas congregation was called on to endure. How they would come through were they thus tried I cannot say, nor can any one be sure.

CHAPTER VI

BEAUTY FOR ASHES



HETHER cathedrals are subject to the human weakness of vanity I have often wondered, and never been able to decide. Of

course they are often empty, and one of the meanings of vanity is emptiness. But this is a sort of involuntary and even compulsory vanity, and is not at all what I have in mind. As far as I am concerned, I had in my early days nothing to be vain about. Indeed it required a large measure of divine grace to save me from an overwhelming sense of humiliation. Yet even then people were drawn to me, seeming to feel that I was "the real thing." One lady in-

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deed once spoke of me as "cute." But on one occasion, after I had more nearly approached the cathedral ideal, I was tempted to self-pride, which is what I mean by vanity. It was on a glittering winter afternoon that my bishop, accompanied by a stranger, whom I have never since seen, entered my west door. When the stranger's eyes fell on my brass altar cross, bathed in the brilliant sunlight which it seemed to absorb into itself, he murmured, with a reverence that could not be mistaken: "How beautiful!" I confess that I took the tribute to myself, as indeed it was so intended, since the cross and the sunlight were part of the whole scene—in other words, part of me.

It was for me a novel and pleasant experience. I could not but rejoice to learn, and for the first time, that I was beautiful even to one man, and to realize that he got from me precisely the impression that cathedrals should convey. Perhaps I was a

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bit vain, and yet I believe that, when the first feeling passed, I was humbly thankful that it had been given me to help a human soul, and, if only for a moment, to lift it heavenward. The temptation passed me by, or was vanquished. Truly I do not covet the praise of men, but I do yearn to help them and be of service to them. As a preacher—for such I hold myself to be—I dare not be vain, proud, haughty, or self-satisfied. But I have a very kindly feeling for the man who first stirred in me the sense, not of self-satisfaction, but self-appreciation. Perhaps it was then that I first realized that I was indeed a cathedral.

I regard myself as in a small way a fulfillment of a very noble prophecy—He shall “give unto them beauty for ashes.” For as I am now—or have been so told—beautiful, I was once in danger of being reduced to ashes. Clearly do I remember the day on which the old shack, in which my soul was at the time housed, took fire.

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The flames were soon extinguished, with only the slightest loss, but they did leave a few ashes. There were expressions of regret that my home had not been completely destroyed, and of belief that no such good luck could be expected by the congregation. I was somewhat shocked till I began to reflect that if there had been more "ashes" there might have been more "beauty." Whether this thought was in the minds of those who mourned over the impotence of the flames, and bewailed the efficiency of the fire department, I am unable to say. It may have been. I shrink from suggesting that the insurance money—but after all men are men!

"Beauty for ashes"—a wonderful exchange it is. It is a passing from death to life; from dull, gray coldness to a rosy and radiant warmth which is itself beauty, power and life. "Beauty for ashes"—it is the gift of the resurrection, as a result of which the poor ashes that are committed to

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the earth are "Fashioned like unto His glorious body, according to the mighty working whereby He is able even to subdue all things unto Himself." Some such experience as that has been mine, though I have not yet entered fully into my new life, and cannot do so till my outward frame is completed. When it is—and it is one of my greatest sorrows that it is not—I shall be clothed with "a glorious body," and enjoy in its fullness the transcendent gift of "beauty for ashes." But cathedrals are noted for their patience, and I am glad to be true to the family tradition. Yet I should be grateful to all who may be disposed to speed the dawn of the day of my glory.

Those who know me best find me somewhat austere in my outward seeming, as I am, and was designed to be. I have no liking for the boudoir style of church—soft, cushioned, padded and luxurious. It is not myself, but the ideal after which I was

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patterned that I praise. In my concrete, uncarpeted floor, uncushioned pews, plain brick walls, wooden roof, stone pulpit and brass lectern, I cannot help taking a modest and chastened pride. My feeling is that a church ought not to inspire one entering it to say "how comfortable," but "how worship-inspiring it is!" It should not appeal merely to the æsthetic sense, but to the sense of mystery as well. The worshiper should see in his church, not a triumph of the art of the upholsterer or interior decorator, but an offering to Almighty God, and a place indwelt by Him. Waking from his desert dream in which he had had a vision of God and the heavenly hosts, Jacob said: "Surely the Lord is in this place; and I knew it not. How dreadful is this place! this is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven." He set up a stone pillar, and said "this shall be God's house." *This* house of God was not merely

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severe and austere, with the terrible austerity of the desert, but also "dreadful."

While, I think, worship should be social—though by no means always or wholly so—in the sense of being the worship of a brotherhood, it should never be social as being in any way related to "society." Of no service is this, in my opinion, truer than the marriage service. Yet it is mostly thought of as a social "function," and is often so marred and vulgarized by display and pomp as to lose most of its solemnity and sacredness, as marriage itself seems to be losing them. To make "the house of God," and "the gate of heaven" a stage for a "show" is blasphemy, though the sin is thoughtless. I often hear of "fashionable weddings"—as well speak of a "fashionable eucharist." The wedding ceremony should be as simple and severely plain as the church building should be. If it were, it is possible that the contracting

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parties might be more deeply impressed with the solemnity of the vows they take, and, as a result, there would be fewer divorces.

I recall one marriage ceremony that seemed to me to be just what it should have been. It took place immediately after the Sunday morning service, such members of the congregation as cared to, remaining in their seats. The bride and groom took their place at the chancel-rail—and were married. That was all there was to it. There were no attendants—except the brother of the bride, who gave her away—no flowers, no elaborate gowns, no parading of young men and women to places carefully fixed for them at a “rehearsal,” no painful approach to the altar with precisely measured steps and dragging feet—but there was a marriage that was a real and reverent church service, led up to by the beautiful service that had preceded it. According

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to the latest reports that have come to me, the young people are still married.

Austerity may be either simple or severe. My preference, as I have already indicated, rather leans to the latter. There can of course be no severity without simplicity, but there can be a simplicity that is not severe. This carries me back in thought to the "upper rooms" of the New Testament. Of one, that in which St. Paul's long sermon was preached, I have spoken, the upper room at Troas. It housed what was undoubtedly a poor congregation, and must have been plain to the point of bareness. It was in an upper room in Jerusalem that the first Christian sermon was preached to the first Christian congregation, numbering one hundred and twenty—St. Peter being the preacher. It was at this service that Matthias was chosen in place of Judas, and "numbered with the eleven apostles." No true Christian can read of those events

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without being deeply moved. One hundred and twenty men and women went forth from that upper room to conquer the world for Jesus Christ and His truth. That room was “the house of God” and “the gate of heaven.”

CHAPTER VII

ROMANCE AND HUMOR



THE supreme shrine of Christians is of course that "upper room" in Jerusalem in which, on the night before His death, Jesus Christ instituted the sacrament of His undying, and deathless love. Not for one moment since that night has that feast ceased to be celebrated—that "silent supper lasting on." Men call it the Last Supper. If they are right, it is one of those last things of which it is said that they shall be first. Through it a never-broken contact—almost a physical contact—has been maintained with that "upper room," with all that went on therein, and with the humble

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men and their great and divine Leader assembled there with the shadows of Calvary hanging over them. It was the most wonderful and terrible night in human history. And of it "the upper room" was an important part. The lordliest cathedral becomes an "upper room" whenever the Eucharist is celebrated, and it is in that way that I like to think of myself.

It would be well, at least so I think, if men would cease talking of transubstantiation, memorial, sacrifice, real presence, and the rest of it, and think of themselves as back in that upper room, and in intimate personal association with the disciples and their Lord. I have no theory of the Eucharist, and am quite devoid of any philosophy regarding it. To me it means what it must have meant to the wondering disciples—memory, association with Jesus and one another, gratitude, loyalty manifested in service, refreshment, and the impartation of divine grace and power. And

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Judas was there! There is a text for a sermon—but I forbear. It was from this solemn and touching meal that he went to his act of treason, and—the words are symbolical as well as descriptive—"it was night." But it grieves me when I hear men arguing about the Lord's Supper. "Do this" was the command. For what purpose? Surely "in remembrance of me." Nothing could have been simpler than that meal in the upper room, or than the room itself. Bread and wine, the commonest things, bread which He had multiplied to feed five thousand people, and wine which He made at the marriage in Cana in Galilee to satisfy a social and human need—these alone constituted the meal. Ever since then bread and wine have been the symbols of hospitality, as they were, and are, vehicles for the communication of the hospitality of the divine Father welcoming His prodigal children to the old home.

Have I been romancing? Well, cathe-

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drals will dream, as Jacob did, and Solomon, and Joseph who was warned three times in dreams against dangers which threatened "the young child and his mother." I myself have long dreamed of the dawning of a day when men—all men—should realize that there is nothing that touches their lives that is more romantic than the religion of Jesus Christ. It is dream, aspiration, hope, faith, love, trust, adventure, daring, danger—it is poetry and power, poetry that is power. It is a life whose "interest's on the dangerous edge of things." Dramatic beyond the greatest dramas of literature—beyond those of Aeschylus or Shakespeare—it would, were it not so terribly misconceived, stir human emotions to their very depths. Yet men seem to see in Christianity nothing more than a bundle of definitions, and are greatly concerned that those definitions be "right." As though they could be, as though it mattered whether they were or not! Men

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have sought, and are still seeking to make a science out of the religion of Jesus Christ, though that is precisely what it is not, and was never meant to be. It is a heart-moving, soul-stirring, mind-captivating romance, and it is in its romantic quality that its truth lies.

But I am getting excited, and cathedrals should never allow themselves to become excited. Nor should they be too serious or earnest. I have confessed to the existence of a certain element of frivolity in my nature. So I am quite willing to be thought frivolous when I say that, as I see things, many of the religious difficulties of the time are due to the lack of a sense of humor in very many Christians. In the skull of the Fundamentalist where there should be a bump of humor there is instead thereof a dent. Only so is it possible to account for his antics. I would, however, keep clear of argument, having no capacity therefor. I only wish to point out that there is room

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for humor in religion, as there is great need for it. Of course "life is real, life is earnest," but it is also fun.

There must be humor in a life ordered by "a hearty God"; and a laughing cathedral, such as I have confessed, or rather avowed myself to be, cannot miss it. I have said something on this subject already, and have no desire to repeat. My purpose now is to show how humor helps to a knowledge of the truth and man's relation thereto, and to a knowledge of self, and also to show—if I can—that one can be earnest without being solemn, and humorous without being indifferent or careless. Probably humor's greatest service is in preventing people from exaggerating their own importance in the human scheme. I have known men who almost seemed to arrogate to themselves the office of the Redeemer of mankind in thinking that they were "set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel." I have—must I confess it?—sometimes been

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tempted to think of myself in that way, and the temptation must have sorely tried those old cathedrals that have seen the panorama of life unfold before them century after century. Perhaps they were saved by their gargoyles.

I have made a discovery that I believe is original with me, and that is that there is a close connection between a sense of humor and the Christian grace of humility. The man who is properly, and not cringingly, humble, knows that in the whole universe of Almighty God there is nothing funnier than the overestimate that some people put on themselves—nothing funnier, that is, unless it be the over-estimators themselves. The physical strut is only the outward and visible sign of an intellectual, moral and spiritual strut. A few Sundays ago I heard read the story of the Pharisee and the Publican. Then it was that it first dawned on me—why the revelation was so belated I cannot understand—that the

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Pharisee was a ridiculous figure and did not know it. The gracious element of humor had been left out of his composition. In the slang of "yesteryear" he was not "on to himself." I once knew a man who marched down the street as though he were at the head of an army, and turned a corner with all the majesty of a great steamer taking a bend of a river. Once a little boy said to him: "Mister, are you anybody in particular?" I never heard the answer. It was probably a scowl, or a pompous rebuke. It could hardly have been a kick, for that would have spoiled the strut.

I have said that I did not believe that men should abase themselves, or grovel in the presence of God, or in their approach to Him. Those who do this are also deficient in the saving grace of humor, that humor with which a "hearty God" must be endowed. Perhaps there is in this rather cringing attitude something of that of which the poet wrote—"the pride that apes hu-

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mility." Extremes in all cases are likely to run off into insincerity. That is an impression which experience stamps very deeply on the life and consciousness of a cathedral. It certainly has been so with me. To many a Christian might fittingly be addressed the question of the small boy: "Are you anybody in particular?"

How a man can be a Christian without being humble I have never been able to understand. For if he is a Christian he must realize that he is not a finished product, any more than I am. He is incomplete, fragmentary, and, as the English king, when he was only Duke of Gloucester, said of himself, "not half made up." The absurd Pharisee of the parable was, spiritually considered, hardly more than a germ or cell, and, worse yet, one heading in the wrong direction. I once heard of a woman who said that she was not conscious of being a sinner, or of ever having sinned. I do not judge her, but I have always thought

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that that very avowal was the best possible proof of her incompleteness. Humility is, I am sure, not as a rule conscious, for when it is, it is likely to be paraded, and ceases to be humility.

It is rather the natural attitude of the trusting and self-knowing soul. The reason, it seems to me, why there is so little genuine humility in the world is because there are so few self-knowing souls, which is only another way of saying because there are so many souls almost wholly devoid of humor. What a comfortable world it would be, and how human relationships would be eased if there were more of this revealing—and self-revealing—humor abroad among men! Life would be much happier and sweeter and more harmonious if there was not one Christian alive of whom one would even dream of asking: “Are you anybody in particular?” There is great need for a new sort of uplifter, one who would work along the lines here suggested. I am doing my part,

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which is after all a humble one, and really believe that I am making some headway. It is not so much the shams as the self-deceived that delay the dawning of the millennium. Yet the denseness of man—who can measure or fathom it?

I would not offend against the law of human kindness, or say anything that might be construed as belittling an honest and earnest effort in a good cause. Yet I cannot help being amused at the extremely serious view which the Daughters of the American Revolution, and certain posts of the American Legion, take of themselves as keepers of the public conscience, protectors and guardians of the patriotism of the American people, and even definers and prescribers of what that patriotism should be. Of the questions and issues involved I may speak later. My only wish now is to point out how much happier these overstrained folk would be if they had a well-defined rather than a rudimentary

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funny-bone. Spectres would disappear, or be recognized as spectres, fears would evaporate, and the burden of saving the country would be shifted from their shoulders to the shoulders of all our citizens—where it belongs. Thus distributed the burden would probably not seem so heavy.

Only the other day I overheard two of these people discussing whether they would “permit” a certain man to make a speech. The discussion was serious and marked by a pop-eyed earnestness. It was interrupted by a curious, cracking sound which might have been thought to be due to the settling of some part of my structure, but was really the best I could do by way of a laugh. My thoughts flew back to Gamaliel (Acts V. 34). I wondered whether we really had made much progress since the days of that great and wise doctor of the law. Self-elected guardians, saviours and censors are always amusing—at least they are to me. I give them credit for meaning well, but they

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certainly are funny. I heard a clergyman once say that if he could no longer believe in the Virgin Birth he would commit suicide. Perhaps humor has no place in the consideration of the question thus raised—and yet I do not know. There is a humor that is reverent. A strange—an amazingly strange—declaration it certainly was.

The feeling that I strive to cultivate is that life, though funny, is not futile, and that man, though insignificant, is a son of Almighty God. But sons may be silly—one of them was a prodigal. So I laugh, without despising or sneering, laugh while continuing to sympathize, and yearning to help. I have learned—and the lesson was difficult—to think of Christianity as a historic faith, and have come to see that, as a part of history, it is subject to development, and capable of almost infinite adaptation. Few things are, to a cathedral, odder than what men have so often made of their re-

ligion, and are making to-day. I once knew a godly woman, one of great intelligence, who thought that the words of the Psalmist "the wicked stand in slippery places" meant that in slippery places the wicked were peculiarly able to maintain an upright position, having in that regard a great advantage over the righteous.

Another of my friends, this time a man, held, and very stoutly, that the nine of the ten healed lepers who hastened to the priests, in accordance with the provisions of the law, and neglected to return to give thanks, were ritualists, and that the Samaritan, who put the duty of thankfulness first, and postponed the observances was a broad churchman. At least this interpretation acquits the nine of conscious and intended ingratitude, and reflects a charitable spirit in the interpreter of which I, as a cathedral, cannot but approve. In the course of my short life, short that is for a cathedral, if I had not been charitable—but with St. Paul

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“I spare you.” There must be curious conceits lurking in every brain, and I know—whether to my joy or sorrow I am not sure—that the brain of a cathedral is not exempt from them.

CHAPTER VIII

THE CATHEDRAL FAMILY



NATURALLY I have had my intellectual difficulties, which is, I suppose, true of all cathedrals. I have, for instance, been told, and believe, that I am the house of God. Yet I heard the minister a few days ago read St. Paul's great sermon preached to the Athens intellectuals or intelligentzia, in the course of which he said: "God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that He is Lord of heaven and earth, and *dwelleth not in temples made with hands.*" It must be therefore either that God does not dwell in me, or else that I was not made with hands. I well remember the happy day of

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my dedication, when I was told, as were the people, that I was the abiding place of the divine presence. In that belief I have lived and ever must live, for if I am not that I am nothing. What the apostle no doubt meant was the localizing of God in such a way as to deny His presence everywhere. There certainly are sacred places, as even Emerson understood:

I laugh at the lore and the pride of man,
At the sophist schools and the learned clan;
For what are they all, in their high conceit,
When man in the bush with God may meet.

But, after all, the "bush" was not "made with hands." As long as I am thrillingly conscious of the divine presence, I am content. The "upper room" in which the Lord's Supper was instituted, assuredly was "made with hands," and there, as in the burning bush, God and man certainly did meet. I have spoken of dullness, as evidenced by the lack of a sense of humor,

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as though it were one of the greatest obstacles to the apprehension—and comprehension—of the truth. So it is, but it is not the only obstacle. Ignorance is another, and a very serious one. I am told that the old cathedrals experience nothing new—that is, essentially new—in life. And I am beginning to share that feeling. It is not easy to surprise or frighten us. The radio and motor car are of course new, but they are mere incidentals. Human nature, the soul of man, God, the relation between God and man, sin, death, love, hate—all these are old, and repeated from age to age. I heard two men the other day talking of evolution as though the doctrine had been formulated only yesterday. Yet my friend and hero, Dr. Browne, of Norwich, said three hundred years ago: “First we are a rude mass, and in the rank of creatures which only are, and have a dull kind of being not yet privileged with life, or preferred to

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sense or reason: Next we live the life of plants, the life of animals, the life of men, and at last the life of spirits, running on in one mysterious nature, those five kinds of existences which comprehend the creatures, not only of the world, but the universe.”

Nor was this wise and good man, a sincere Christian and devout churchman, disturbed by what seemed to be a conflict between evolution and the first chapters of Genesis, which he treated as allegorical. “Truly,” he writes in his *Religio Medici*, “for the first chapters of Genesis, I must confess a great deal of obscurity; though divines have to the power endeavored to make all go in a literal meaning, yet these allegorical interpretations are also probable.” Such knowledge of the past—all knowledge in fact—does a great deal to soften shocks. It is the same knowledge as that which cathedrals acquire through experience—the knowledge that I am in the

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hope of acquiring as my span of life lengthens. It is a great hope, and one that I feel will be realized.

I have said that I have no windows "richly dight." But how I do covet them! One of the greatest sorrows of my life is that I have never seen, and never shall see the glorious glass of European cathedrals. I know that we are commanded not to covet, but the prohibition is directed only against coveting what belongs to another. I would not despoil Rheims or Sainte Chapelle of a single pane. Surely it is as commendable for cathedrals as for men to feel a sense of their incompleteness, and realize how far they fall short of that perfection which is the God-ordained goal. I am not one-half finished, and even the part that is, after a fashion, finished, is itself incomplete, very painfully so. I am sure it is not vanity that inspires me, but rather a longing to fulfil in the most effective way the mission with which I have been entrusted. It is the duty

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of a cathedral to be—a cathedral. It is a matter of fulfilling the law of one's being. That is a law which it is sinful not to obey.

Not only do I not covet the glass of other cathedrals—I would not even enter into competition with them, or dream of doing so. Such treasures as are these are far beyond my reach, and would be sadly out of place as parts of my plain structure. But there are plenty of beautiful windows to be had. With them, and a few “brasses black and red,” and perhaps in years to come a tomb or so, I should have much more of the cathedral feeling. It seems ungracious to complain—and in truth I do not mean to do so—when I have so much for which to be thankful. I am, like the city of Zoar, “a little one,” and so can never hope to give the impression of power that is conveyed by mass, and great size. But it is possible that, as the years pass, I may acquire a beauty that shall inspire reverence, as I have indeed already done in one case

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—that of the stranger so deeply impressed by the wintry sunlight on my altar cross. If the power of size and mass can never be mine, that is all the more reason why the power of beauty should. So I cry out for glory in glass.

Cathedrals, I suppose, are interested in one another. It is curious that I should have a sort of kinship with Rheims through a casual contact of one of my people with it. But such is the fact. My friend told me of his impressions substantially as follows: "We made our way into Rheims Saturday evening just as the afternoon was drawing to a close. It was a fitting time for approach. The cathedral was magnificent in its ruined state, which is being repaired as rapidly as possible. A thousand years hence the great war will be but a small episode in the life of this glorious church. After dinner it seemed natural, as 'the darkness deepens,' to wander back to the

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cathedral for a twilight view. But there was more than a view, superb as that was. Doubtless ignorance was the cause of the surprise—as it is of most surprises—but it certainly was startling to hear the sound of organ and choir. It was not ghostly music, but real. One transept of the cathedral was not seriously damaged, and in it there was slight evidence of injury. It was used as a chapel, and very beautiful it was. It was dimly lighted, solely for the benefit of the choir, which, under the leadership of a young priest, was rehearsing for the next day's service, at which a cardinal was to be present.

“The music was solemnly fine, and beautifully rendered. That it was in Rheims cathedral, which was supposed to be dumb, multiplied the impression many fold. The twilight, the dim church, the lovely music, the hearers (many of whom came from far, the Philippines, California, and Australia),

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and the unexpectedness of the experience, all contributed to the creation of an impression that will not soon be effaced. There is surely in this world much that 'in a sense outlasts death.' This must be true of beauty and truth when they combine to express the religious feelings and aspirations of human hearts, especially when those hearts have been stricken. The evening will not soon be forgotten by those pilgrims who stumbled on a choir practice in Rheims cathedral. The day closed in peace and quiet, with every prospect of a sound night's rest, perhaps with dreams of the great cathedral which, though sorely wounded, still speaks the language of divine love, and bears pathetic and majestic testimony to divine truth."

I think I understand, and I know that, I, a cathedral myself, with much of the family sentiment, feel the profound truth of what the poet says in speaking of those who have

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—mightily won

God out of knowledge, and good out of infinite
pain,

And sight out of blindness and purity out of a
stain.

My friend was right in saying that the World War is merely an incident in the life of Rheims. One can imagine the great cathedral in days to come smiling at it as a piece of incredible—and pathetic—human folly. To win “God out of knowledge,” and yet men fear and distrust knowledge, shrink from it, and seem to scorn it. But cathedrals know better, for they have learned, not only obedience, but much else by the things which they have suffered. The idea of “good out of infinite pain” must seem the wildest folly—though it is a divine truth—to those who deny that pain has any real existence. Rheims has endured horrible pain, and seen good come out of it. Only those who never heard of Bartimaeus can doubt that there is such a thing as “sight out of blind-

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ness" through the ministration of divine
love. "Go and sin no more"—can any, ex-
cept the successors of the Pharisees, ques-
tion that there may be, nay, often is,
"purity out of a stain"? Thus it is, I think,
that cathedrals view, and always have
viewed, human life, with charity, pity,
kindly sympathy, and, I think I may say,
with a wondering admiration that it is, on
the whole, so brave and true and fine. I
know that I love my people, and this must
be even more true of those great cathedrals
which for hundreds of years have been in
such close and intimate contact with the
general life, and have shared the joys and
sorrows, the triumphs and defeats of count-
less generations of men and women—and
little children—on whom life often bore
with terrible and crushing severity.

CHAPTER IX

ORTHODOX HERETICS



I KNOW that I am not old enough to be entitled to express any decided opinions on the great questions of the day. Yet I have acquired something of the historic sense, and I suppose that to it is due the wonder that I feel that men should think that they can do certain things, and even try to do them, without regard to other things that were done, or that had happened centuries ago. It is not so easy as some think to rewrite history, and it is very difficult to reverse its judgments. In much of the talk about church unity there is always a disposition to pass over differences as in-

significant, though they are often the very differences that keep the churches apart. What is more important, they are the products of great historic movements, and as a rule were—and are—the culmination of those movements. It is a mistake to attribute these differences to mere human wilfulness or pride. These no doubt had something to do with them. But they are largely the result of social, political and religious causes that operated powerfully on the human spirit.

A striking instance of attempting the impossible is afforded by certain people in my own communion, who seem to think that they can write the Reformation off the pages of history, and treat it as though it had never had a real existence. These people are to-day—many of them—Roman Catholics in everything but allegiance to the pope as an infallible spiritual and temporal ruler. Back to the pre-Reformation days they would go, and carry with them the whole

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Anglican communion. Yet the Reformation after all did happen, and it is graven deep in the consciousness of English-speaking peoples, who, though having the highest regard and deepest respect for their Roman Catholic brethren, differ from them radically in their way of looking at both religious and political questions. I am not saying that these people are right or wrong, but I do say that, while their appeal is always to history, they leave out of their calculations the most important historical event of the past fifteen hundred years—the Protestant Reformation. What they propose is one of those things that cannot be done because certain other things were done four hundred years ago.

My people are Protestant, not only in religion, but in politics, education, in their creation of and attitude toward institutions, and in their whole way of looking at things. The temper—perhaps even the structure—of their minds is altogether Protestant, and

it is every year growing more so. I am not justifying or defending, but only stating facts, as I see them. I am willing to agree that there was much that was regrettable in the Reformation, and that it was not an un-mixed good. Nor have I any intellectual kinship or sympathy with extreme Protestantism, which, it seems to me, is exceedingly defective. The task is to enlighten and liberalize it, to bring it into closer touch with knowledge and beauty, and to lift it out of its narrow literalism, which, by the way, it shares with Roman Catholicism. What I fear is that the so-called Anglo-Catholic movement will, as far as it succeeds, lead not merely to the adoption of certain ceremonies and rites—which are indifferent things—but to that obscurantism which I regard as one of the deadliest foes of religion, and that too at a time when the breath of a new knowledge is stirring amid the dry bones, and, as a result, old things, few of which are vital, are passing away.

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Never since the day of Pentecost has a greater opportunity for usefulness been offered to man than that which is now presented to the Anglican communion. But it must go forward and not back. It cannot jump the Reformation. Indeed we may have to go through another Reformation—perhaps we are going through it now. There is great need for wise and courageous leadership. My feeling is that the church of which I am a very humble representative, can, if it will, offer such leadership, and by so doing grandly serve the cause of religion, and free, enlighten and comfort many a human soul.

I have said something of the sorrows in the life of a cathedral growing out of its sense of incompleteness. But the matter is important, and will bear repetition. I do not believe that the reason for this feeling is generally understood—perhaps is not understood at all. It is a case of thwarted desire—desire, not to make a show, but to

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serve. The capacity of a cathedral for service is very greatly limited and impaired by its unfinished state. Indeed, a cathedral is not a cathedral until it is finished and consecrated. It is a serious error not to credit a cathedral with this feeling. I read not long ago a brutal and vulgar attack on the Bishop of New York who when "reviled, reviled not again." Some of his methods in connection with cathedral-building may be open to question, but I feel that he is right in his determination to finish the mighty structure on Morningside Heights at the earliest possible day, and am quite sure that the cathedral of St. John the Divine, could it speak with human tongue, would express to him its deep gratitude for furthering its very proper ambition to stand before the world in its sublime completeness as a witness to the truth of Jesus Christ.

An unfinished cathedral, let it never be forgotten, is a maimed cathedral, and is inefficient just to the extent that it is maimed.

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I feel very strongly on this subject, and am sure that I have the sympathy of my more fortunate brothers—or sisters—many of whom, it is true, were a long time reaching completeness, but who now have attained that blessed state. I do not believe that people realize that cathedrals have any such feelings as I have described, or indeed any feelings at all. Nevertheless, they are extremely sensitive—sensitive, I sometimes fear, to the point of self-consciousness. Yet those who are not conscious of their defects or deficiencies, and are not trying to remove them, are, just to that extent, strangers to the divine commonwealth. The fact that we cathedrals are not responsible for the defect of incompleteness does not make it any the less painful. There is, it should be remembered, a divine rebuke for those who fail to finish what they have begun. A few Sundays ago I heard these words read from the lectern: “Which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and

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counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it? Lest haply, after he hath laid the foundation, and is not able to finish it, all they that behold it begin to mock him, saying, This man began to build, and was not able to finish," and I wondered whether he who read the words of Jesus Christ and those who heard them, realized that they were in precisely that case.

Yet I am no believer in the American gospel of rush and hurry, but I am a convinced believer in the gospel of self-realization, if it is the best self that is to be realized, and also in the gospel of wholeness and totality. All I desire is to be truly "me." So I am willing and glad to give the Bishop of New York credit for the noblest motives, and also for a loving regard for the feelings, hopes and aspirations of the great cathedral which is soon to crown the wonderful city which is its home. When the gigantic task is done, the little criticisms, and the littler—if possible—critics will be

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forgotten, and the end will crown the work and make it glorious. If the longing for completeness and perfection is not a Christian longing there is no such thing. If cathedrals did not feel it they would not be Christian cathedrals. This life is a pressing forward, a straining toward the goal, and that goal is wholeness and perfection. Except for this pressing forward toward that goal the human race would never have emerged from savagery, and Christianity would never have triumphed. So my plea is, not for myself, except as servant to my people, and to my community, and therefore is in no sense selfish. It is a plea for "fullness of life," of life to be shared with, and with the help of, God, imparted to my people.

Cathedrals, I have remarked, have a sense of humor, and inferentially this is to claim that great gift for myself. I am sure that I have a capacity for being amused. Were I devoid of it, I should be the most miserable of created things, or beings. Not

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long ago I heard two of my friends soberly discussing, and from the religious point of view, the question of priority as between man and ape, one holding that the ape came first in the scheme of creation and was the ancestor of man, and the other insisting that the ape was a late comer, and was a degenerate man—a man who had lost his way. Of course either theory is consistent with the teaching of the evolutionists, which is, not that man is descended from the ape, but that the two are related through the common possession of life, as are all created things.

This great truth is a Bible truth, and has been held by the devoutest Christians, by St. Francis, for instance, sentimentally at least. The wonderful Song of the Three Children is an appeal to all nature, organic and inorganic, to praise God. Beginning with the angels, the heavens, the heavenly powers, the sun, the moon, the stars, the

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winds and the seasons, the heat and the cold, the days and nights, the song descends to earth, and continues: "O let the earth bless the Lord: yea, let it praise Him, and magnify Him forever. O ye mountains and hills, bless ye the Lord: praise Him, and magnify Him forever. O all ye green things upon the earth, bless ye the Lord: praise Him, and magnify Him forever. O ye wells, bless ye the Lord: praise Him, and magnify Him forever. O ye seas and floods, bless ye the Lord: praise Him, and magnify Him forever. O ye whales, and all that move in the waters, bless ye the Lord: praise Him, and magnify Him forever. O all ye fowls of the air, bless ye the Lord: praise Him, and magnify Him forever. O all ye beasts and cattle, bless ye the Lord: praise Him, and magnify Him forever. Then follows a call to worship addressed to "the children of men," "the priests of the Lord," "the servants of the Lord," "the

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spirits and souls of the righteous," and "the holy and humble men of heart." The Psalmist would have "mountains and all hills, fruitful trees and all cedars, beasts and all cattle, worms and feathered fowls" join with "kings of the earth, and all people, princes and all judges of the world, young men and maidens, old men and children" in praising "the name of the Lord." Of "the whole creation," and not a fragment of it, St. Paul said that it "groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now."

All creatures, including man (and ape), are united through the possession of the great common gift of life, and their capacity for worship, which they must have, or they would not have been commanded to worship. Solemn and magnificent as it all is, I was moved to mirth by the discussion of my two friends, for they were both, from the Bible point of view, heretics without knowing it! I do not argue the question of evolution, for I have no gift for science—

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would that others were as sanely modest!—but I cannot believe that religion and faith are to be saved by destroying, even in thought, the superb unity of God's universe. So I look to religion, rather than science, to confound the unconscious heretics. Faith in Jesus Christ, and in His power to help, heal, bless and save, faith in Him as “the way, the truth and the life,” does not rest on anything that science may say, and would endure no matter what science might discover to be true or false—even in regard to the Bible itself.

I could not help being amused at the discussion of my friends, which was so wide of the mark, and revealed such a depth of ignorance even of the religion they professed, an ignorance which even I was able to recognize. I was saddened too, but still my sense of humor was titilated. Was I not right when I said that a sense of humor often helps greatly to a recognition and appreciation of truth? Humor, when yoked

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with tolerance and charity, is indeed almost a revealer of truth. One must smile, if somewhat wistfully, over the strange but indisputable fact that some of the worst heresies are found among the orthodox.

CHAPTER X

SALVATION THROUGH HUMOR



I AM afraid that I am somewhat hard of hearing. This rather unpleasant thought occurred to me for the first time when they put a sounding board over my pulpit. I have too heard people say that there is a certain section of my nave in which it is almost impossible to understand what is said in chancel or pulpit. Such a possibility of deafness on my part—and I fear it is more than a possibility—is seriously disturbing, for it has a direct bearing on the authenticity of this record. It may be—to recur to my humorous experiences—that some of the curious and even ridiculous things that

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I have recorded, and shall record, as having been heard, were really not heard aright, and that their amusing quality is due, in part at least, to "mine own infirmity."

But the sermon of which I am now to speak was delivered, not in my present building, but in the old wooden one, which, as a matter of fact, was not a cathedral, but a pro-cathedral. Of its acuteness of hearing there never was any question. The preacher had been a missionary, charged with the cure of souls in a region in which cannibalism was the fashionable cult. The effect of the sermon was heightened by the physique of the preacher, for he was to the life the missionary portrayed by irreverent persons, and doomed by them to the bubbling kettle. He was short, round, plump, and he certainly looked tender. Of the story which he told there could have been no better illustration than the teller of it. As the central figure of the "near" tragedy he was ideal. If he had been tall,

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sinewy, stringy and scrawny, the first sensation of the congregation would have been one of wonder that even the hungriest of man-eaters could have thought of him as food. As it was, the congregation found it difficult to understand how the preached escaped.

But that he did escape was of course obvious—for did he not stand before us? The story was less thrilling than it would have been had the ending not been known in advance. But that is true of all historic events, and yet history is interesting. So was the sermon, taken in connection with all that went with it. On one point the curiosity of the people was not satisfied till the very last, and so the element of surprise or suspense was not lacking. The preacher described himself as “stripped” for action, the kettle as bubbling over a vigorous fire, and made it clear that no help was in sight. On every lip was the question: “How *did* he escape?” The method was simple, and

yet ingenious. The elected victim "made faces" which so stirred the risibilities of the savages as to make them feel that it would never do to lose one who promised so well as the tribe's jester.

The preacher, I should add, repeated his grimaces in the pulpit. It is another illustration of the power—the saving power—of humor. If this recital be thought undignified in a cathedral, I can only say that it all happened. That being the case, I feel that it would be both unfair and unkind to withhold the story from those who may chance to read this memoir. It later turned out that in all probability the events described—with illustrations—never happened at all. The story at any rate records the triumph of the comic spirit—the spirit over the flesh—and also affords proof that there is not much difference in the ideas of fun held by the savage and the civilized man. The humor of course was primitive, but then there is much of the primitive in

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even the most sophisticated product of civilization. It is through the primitive element in their nature that men are related, and by it that they are bound together.

I often wonder how old a joke has to be before it can be said to be dead. My own opinion is that death never comes to a joke. Though it may not have been heard for years, perhaps centuries, it is new, and seems to be new-born to those whose ears it assails for the first time, which reminds me that it was Shakespeare who said:

A jest's prosperity lies in the ear
Of him that hears it, never in the tongue
Of him that makes it.

The pleasantry that I now have in mind made its first appearance four hundred years ago, when a man, wandering through one of the great English cathedrals—Lichfield, I think it was—asked the guide why it was that the eagle was used for the reading desk or lectern. The answer was: “Be-

cause it is a bird of prey." Only a few days ago I heard the same question asked and the same answer given. The jest was very plainly new to the man who made the inquiry. Whether it was to the guide I cannot say. But I am sure that he did not know that it was at least four hundred years old. In one of the Howells' novels is the story of a shipwrecked man, one who had suffered greatly, who said to his companions that when he landed on America's shores he was going to start inland carrying an oar, and keep on marching till some one asked him what that thing was that he had on his shoulder—the same thing was said, under similar conditions, by one of the Homeric heroes. I have never been able to decide whether a joke does really die, so that he who uses it again after a long lapse of time is in truth an originator, or whether it somehow lives on from age to age. I am inclined toward the latter view, which is

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the only one that is consistent with the theory—which I believe to be perfectly sound—that there are no new jokes. How they live, and what the law is that governs their reappearance, I do not know.

This is all rather outside the scope of my activities, and yet it is not unrelated to cathedral life. For in many cathedrals there are memorials carved in stone, not to honor those to whom they are dedicated, but to make them ridiculous, and in jesting fashion to carry on a grudge from generation to generation. People have long since forgotten what the grudge was, but the ancient jest stands, and is as much a part of the cathedral as the altar itself. A great woman has called architecture “frozen music.” Such humor and jesting as I have just referred to might well be called “frozen malice.” I am very thankful that I am—as yet—free from this taint, for such I hold it to be. My preference is for a more kindly

humor, and for jests that have in them nothing of "the practical." I would not be thought soft or incapable of sternness, but I hope I am incapable of malice.

I wonder whether Bacon was right when he wrote: "'What is truth?' said jesting Pilate, and would not stay for an answer." If so, the Procurator's jesting was of the sneering and sardonic order. But it has always seemed to me that two other interpretations were possible, and that either of them was more likely to be right than Bacon's. The question may have been prompted by despair, much as my young people a few years ago, and in lighter vein, were accustomed to ask: "What's the use?" Amid the intellectual, political and spiritual confusion of the time, and especially in that fateful hour of Pilate's and the world's life, the state of his mind may have been one of utter and pitiable turmoil. That does not seem to me to be an unreasonable point of view. The other possibility is that

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this very confusion and despair may have stirred in the man a longing for a solution of his problems, and made him an honest seeker after truth. The impression one gets of Pilate in that momentous hour of his—and the world's—life, is not that of a jesting man. He was puzzled, perplexed, wavering and fearful, but not disposed to humor. He was also mightily impressed by the divine prisoner whom it was his unfortunate fate to judge and condemn. Bacon, I am convinced, was wrong.

The church is content to state the fact: "He was crucified under Pontius Pilate." It is better so. The world has often cartooned as jesters men who were terribly in earnest, and, on the other hand, has taken as prophets, guides, leaders, and even saviours, men who were the most pitiful of jesters—or rather, jokes. And man may sometimes be both "the jester and the jest." It is of course true that men may make themselves ridiculous, in which case even

cathedrals cannot refrain from laughing at them, but—and this is the point—they ought not to be made ridiculous or contemptible by the cathedrals that do the laughing, and should not by them, as immature campaign orators say, be “pilloried” or “flayed.”

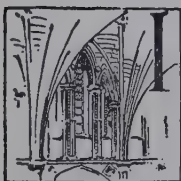
I do not believe, in spite of what the Psalmist says, that God will ever “laugh all the heathen to scorn.” For I cannot think of scorn as having any abiding place in the heart of Him of whom the Psalmist, in a better mood, said: “Like as a father pitieth his own children, even so is the Lord merciful unto them that fear Him. For He knoweth whereof we are made; He remembereth that we are but dust.” Men have ever imputed unto God as righteousness what they at the time felt—God knows why!—was righteous in their own lives and ways of thinking. Christ’s words “with what judgment ye judge ye shall be judged” may, it seems, have a much wider

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and vastly deeper application than is usually given to them. For men may, and do, judge God. It is notorious that they judge one another, as Bacon did Pilate, and often with the grossest and cruelest injustice. Whether jests are old or new, it would be much better if they never had a sting.

CHAPTER XI

PEACE AND FORGIVENESS



I HAVE said that I have lived through two wars. My heartfelt hope is that I may never see another one. I should have been dull indeed had I failed to be impressed and saddened by the deplorable and demoralizing effects of the World War. I am not now thinking of lawlessness and banditry, and certainly not of the looting of my poor-box, of which I shall speak later. These are bad enough, but much less bad than the lowering, and in some cases the repudiation, of Christian standards. I once heard two men talking of a sermon they had just heard in which Christianity had

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been criticized as standing too strongly for peace. One of the men—I could hardly believe it—spoke of meetings of youthful Christians being broken up because they were opposed to compulsory military training. “It’s lucky for old Ben Franklin,” the man went on, “that he’s dead. If he were alive the police would be on his trail, for he was such a ‘traitor’ as to say that ‘there never was a good war or a bad peace.’”

I do not believe that any one who has kept his ears open can help feeling that peace is under suspicion, so painfully careful are men to “define” it, and, as they say, to “make clear” what they mean by it—or rather what they do not mean. It is a curious state of mind, and—though I would speak with charity—wholly unchristian. The conversation of which I have just spoken closed in this rather startling fashion: “Well, if Jesus Christ was on earth to-day, they probably would not crucify Him, but they might send Him to Leavenworth.”

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Fear and hate are widespread, and they usually go together. Such, it seems to me, is the least part of the harvest of the war, and, as I see it, it is a crop of tares, and tares only.

I can imagine that the old cathedrals may have become somewhat used, and perhaps rather resigned, to things which sicken, distress and shock my inexperienced youth. Yet I would not grow harder as I grow older, though I could just now make good and helpful use of a much larger and more enduring patience than I possess. Against the evils which have so distressed me, the religion of Jesus Christ, as I understand it, is an eternal protest, a protest that should be made by the church and her clergy with the intensest zeal. I remember that St. Paul said: "Do I now persuade men, or God? Or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ." My earnest desire is that the Christian church in all its branches should be-

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come a great peace society, a liberation society, fighting fear, hatred, suspicion, suppression and oppression, and doing it all in the name of the great Lover of man, and in His spirit.

I am against war—though I do not suppose the fact is important—not only because it is senseless and horrible, but also because of its debasing effects on the minds and consciences of the people, effects which operate long after peace is declared. When peace does come, it should be a real peace, and not one hedged about with provisos and limitations, the peace of a people unafraid rather than of a people cowering in panic, eager to throw away or murder their liberties in return for a protection they do not need, and which they should scorn. “Neither shall they learn war any more”—has not the time come for the fulfillment of that noble prophecy?

Though I have confessed to a certain dullness of hearing, I am humbly glad to

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believe that my inner ear has never been deaf to the voice of God. In the stillness of the night when I am alone I have often caught its whisperings, for it is, as in the days of Elijah, "a still, small voice." One must harken if one would understand. The air is full of voices, pulsating and throbbing with them, voices that fight one another. Never before was there such a "strife of tongues," not even in the old Babel days. We are living in an age of talk, preëminently so. But as the earthquake, the whirlwind and the fire were but the preludes to the divine message, so too may be the riot and tumult of the twentieth century. If God's voice came to me—as it has done more than once—it may come to others, to some perhaps through me.

Three distinct calls I am conscious of having heard—"Be not faithless but believing," "Hold fast till I come," and "Certainly I will be with thee." Nor should I forget a fourth: "Underneath are the ever-

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lasting arms." This four-fold message is, I am aware, old, and yet it is ever new, for the spiritual needs of men and cathedrals never change, but are eternally the same. They all may be reduced to two—faith, and the assurance of divine support. "Certainly I will be with thee" in order that thou mayest "be not faithless but believing," and may "hold fast till I come." One of the greatest griefs of my life is that so few people seem to realize that religion is something that they need, and cannot get on without. It is nothing more or less—nothing could be "more"—than the relation between God and the human soul, between those who need the assurance and Him who imparts it. I know that the gift of faith is mine, and that God is present with me, and knowing that, nothing else matters. What I believe in I do not know or care as long as I believe in "God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Yet many of the people who feel no

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need for religion are, in my opinion, often right, since religion as it is frequently presented to them has no power to satisfy spiritual hunger. Most of it is what a great writer has called "extra-belief," bearing no relation of any sort to man's life. The same writer also declared that poetry would become more and more "a stay." There can be no such stay as a belief in the God, not of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, but of Jesus Christ. "Certainly I will be with thee"—that was all that Moses needed to know, all that any one needs to know. A great English bishop once said: "If we would not call opinions by the name of religion, and superstructures by the name of fundamental articles!" It is to opinions, superstructures and inferences—some of which are helpful, but most of which are not—that the majority of our present troubles are due, as is a great deal of the indifference toward religion and the church.

Long after I received the four divine

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messages of which I have spoken, I received a fifth: "When thou art converted strengthen thy brethren." To this end I have honestly and most earnestly striven, with what success only Almighty God knows. Yet I cherish the hope that there are some souls that have derived help, strength, comfort and inspiration through contact and association with me. For if there is not at least one such soul, I have utterly failed in what I firmly believe to be my mission. Cathedrals are not mere places in which services are held, but are rather personalities of whose life the first law is that of service. Men need to be made and kept true and strong, steadfast and serenely courageous in the face of dangers and trials, and faithful in the sense of being both loyal, and full of faith.

"When thou art converted strengthen thy brethren"—such I conceive to be my supreme function. That I may be endued with power and grace to perform it is my

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daily and hourly prayer. I had almost forgotten one incident in my life, unimportant in itself, and yet it had an important effect on my character, and resulted in my complete conversion, which up to then had been only in part. I mean the robbing of the poor-box which stands just inside my front door. My first feeling was one of indignation over an outrage that I was powerless to prevent. Never was I more painfully conscious of my helplessness. This consciousness, with its pain, increased when I realized that, though I had seen the thief, and could identify him, I could in no way help to apprehend him, and could not impart my knowledge to others. This was followed by an overwhelming temptation, to which I yielded for a time, to think ill of humanity as a whole. The race that could produce a man base enough to rob a poor-box—what could one hope for it, or expect from it? Yet I had believed myself to be charged with the duty—which had

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hitherto been a pleasure—to work through the human race for the good of mankind and the glory of God.

Humanity as my material seemed hopeless. It is not generally known that cathedrals may suffer agonies, but such was my fate. I applied to myself the words of the prophet: “Behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow.” I was perilously near losing my faith in both God and man. Then it was that I thought of Jean Valjean who, after he had been treated as a human being, and been fed by Bishop Myriel, stole the silver candlesticks of his gentle host. When the thief—who was an escaped convict—was arrested, and, with the candlesticks, brought before the man he had robbed, the bishop said that he had given the candlesticks to the thief as to an old friend. That gave me a way of escape from the mental distress that had been mine. Ever since then I have said to myself that I gave the money—a paltry sum—in

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the poor-box to the man who had taken it. From that moment I have never thought poorly of humanity—not even of the man who took the money—never wavered in my faith in God and man, never doubted my divinely appointed mission.

CHAPTER XII

SIN AND CRIME



M I dangerously sentimental? Probably, for Hugo was a great sentimentalist. Valjean's new life, and a noble one it was, dates from his experience with Bishop Myriel. I am by no means sure that a filling-station bandit would respond to such treatment. Perhaps such pitifulness should be shown only by bishops and cathedrals. I can only say that when pity filled my heart I once more became a laughing cathedral. I would say that sins and crimes cannot be dealt with in the same way. There are sins that are not crimes—idolatry, for instance, and covetousness—as there are crimes that

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are not sins. The difficulty arises when the two acts are combined in one, as in the case of theft. It was with sin that I was concerned, and I believe I was right in thinking of it as I did. To me no case seems hopeless, no situation desperate. How often had I heard, and joined in the prayer: "Let Thy continual pity cleanse and defend Thy church." If the church asks for and needs pity, it surely should show it. If it can be cleansed and defended by pity, so may the life of the sinner be.

Great is the cleansing power of pity both in the lives of those who show it, and of those to whom it is extended. I certainly have felt its purifying and strengthening influence. And so once more I became, as I have said, a laughing cathedral, and was saved from gloom and despair and utter loss of faith. I should be glad to know something of the spiritual state—and of the life—of him who broke open and looted my poor-box, and would be specially glad

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if he could know how I feel toward him. Trifling though the incident was, I am other than I would have been—better, I must believe—had it never happened. I have the highest hopes for humanity, and am tenderly proud to be associated with it in the great work of regeneration and redemption. I know too what redemption means, for was I not redeemed myself?

A cathedral can hardly help seeing and noticing what is going on in the world, and drawing certain conclusions from its observations. If conclusions are based on an experience of a thousand years they are likely to be valuable. My conclusions are of less value because drawn from an experience of less than fifty years. But I share to some extent in the traditions of my venerable kinsmen, and have absorbed, I hope, something of their spirit. Furthermore, the distinction between sin and crime, which was, I have shown, so deeply graven in my soul, and of which I now propose to speak

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further, was a source of light to me, and may be to others. I am convinced that not much can be done in the way of making men good by law. Goodness is the fruit and flowering of a good character, and statutes are powerless to create character. The Jews tried it and failed, and the Puritans tried it and failed. St. Paul witnessed the failure of the Jews, and he predicted—by implication—the failure of the Puritans, and other likeminded people. The cathedrals that stabled the horses of Cromwell's troopers saw one of the most terrible reactions known to history.

A great many people misread their Bibles, as when they construe the words "touch not, taste not, handle not" as a divine prohibition of the use of intoxicating liquors. Yet St. Paul sets out the words only to condemn them. Every time I hear them read I marvel how they could have been so generally misunderstood and misapplied. The passage will be found in the

second chapter of the epistle to the Colossians, and is as follows: "Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances (touch not; taste not; handle not which are all to perish with the using;) after the commandments and doctrines of men." What is here prohibited is not the use of liquor, but the reliance on laws and ordinances as promoters of virtue. It would almost seem as though the apostle had our modern slogan in mind. There are, I suppose, many who think that the Rechabites—that is, if there are many who ever heard of them—were commended by God for their abstinence from wine. Here again I marvel that a plain story could have been so misconceived—misconceived in such a way as utterly to destroy its point. It was, I seem to remember, Jeremiah the prophet who, in obedience to God's command, and in the Lord's house, offered these people

wine. They refused because their father had forbidden them to drink wine, build houses, sow seed or plant vineyards. Then it was that the prophet said: "Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, the God of Israel: Because ye have obeyed the commandment of Jonadab your father, and kept all his precepts, and done according with all that he hath commanded you; therefore thus saith the Lord of Hosts, the God of Israel; Jonadab the son of Rechab shall not want a man to stand before me forever."

It was obedience that was rewarded, obedience shown in not building houses or sowing seed or planting vineyards as truly as in refraining from wine. If an argument be found here against the use of wine it is precisely as strong against living in houses and raising crops. The point was that while these people obeyed their ancestor in everything, even in matters of little moment, the people of Israel would not obey their divine Father in great things that touched

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their eternal welfare. I have never looked on Jonadab as a lawgiver to Christians. St. Paul, who wrote to Timothy: "Drink no longer water, but use a little wine for thy stomach's sake," could not have used the words "touch not, taste not, handle not" in the sense in which many suppose them to have been used. The conclusion, as it seems to be, is that many things are illegal—perhaps rightly made so—that are not sins. What I humbly object to is that we should hold the drinking of wine sinful, wine which Jesus Christ miraculously made for a social use, which He Himself drank (and was denounced for so doing), which He consecrated on the night before His crucifixion, and which has ever since been used in the sacrament of His love.

It is the excessive use of it, as by "the drunkards of Ephraim," that is condemned in Scripture. I do not forget the unfortunate experiences of Lot and Noah, but here again the sin was in the excess. I do not

argue for a divine sanction for the use of wine, or appeal to isolated texts, which is a very bad practice, but only against condemning as sinful a thing that is without any moral or immoral quality whatever. Whether the state has a right to make a crime out of an act that is morally indifferent is a question that I leave to statesmen who vote dry and live wet. I am no statesman or authority on government. Perhaps the author of the Book of Proverbs was right when he said "wine is a mocker, and strong drink raging," and indeed both are dangerous. Yet St. Paul did advise his "son in the gospel" to make use of the "mocker."

CHAPTER XIII

RELATION TO THINGS



NOTE two things which seem to me to be specially characteristic of these times—excessive talk and excessive mo-

tion, motion often without apparently aim or end, and without thought of destination as a resting place. One of my favorite prophets, Malachi, says: "Then they that feared the Lord spake often to one another"—so people do to-day. But there does not seem to be any connection between the constant and continuous flow of talk, and fear of the Lord, that fear that was the promoting cause of the talk spoken of by Malachi. I am reminded rather of the words of Jesus

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Christ: "I say unto you, that every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned." Those people referred to by the prophet were, according to eminent authority, "the true fearers of God, the little flock gathered together in private exercises of religion."

I would not be harsh in my judgment—and yet I wonder and speculate. It does not seem unkind to suggest that when people speak "often to one another," as when they "visit over the telephones," they should occasionally have something to say really worth saying. I do not mean that conversation should always be "improving," and even rehearsed and laid out beforehand, nor do I deprecate what may be called a rational flippancy, which may be far removed from "foolish jesting" which is condemned by the apostle. But there should be some

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place for seriousness, and a certain dignity in the use of one of the greatest and noblest powers man possesses, the power of speech. "A word fitly spoken," it has been observed, "is like apples of gold in pictures of silver." But whether good or bad there may be too much talk, for the authority just cited also said: "In the multitude of words there wanteth not sin: but he that refraineth his lips is wise." Judged thus, what a sinful and foolish generation this must be, for never before in the history of the world was there such "a multitude of words!" Loquacity seems to be foolish, as well as sinful, for it is thus condemned: "A fool's voice is known by multitude of words." There is apparently a time to keep "silence even from good words"—how much more then from follies, trivialities, and falsehoods!

Of course as a cathedral I am no advocate of glumness or taciturnity. But I do believe that without "measured speech" there

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can be no "ordered action." Obviously it follows that where there is no "ordered action" there is anarchy. A great English poet, speaking of his beloved England, said: "Babble, babble; our old England may go down in babble at last." And again he said: "Step by step we rose to greatness—through the tonguesters we may fall." It has not, as far as I know, occurred to any one of our wise men to trace any of our troubles to this source, or to attribute loose and unruly conduct to loose and unruly tongues. It may be that even a very insignificant cathedral is wiser than the wise men. Such an explanation seems reasonable to me, impressed as I have so often been with the divine hush within me of which I am conscious, a hush that seems to inspire a feeling of reverence in even the most careless worshipers.

When I hear the shrieking, grinding and growling of the radio, I always think of the words: "Be still then and know that I

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am God." Shakespeare says that, at least in times of peace, "there's nothing so becomes a man as modest stillness and humility." Can men talk themselves out of God, out of all consciousness of His presence? So it would seem. There must be time for thought, reading, meditation and communion with God, and a spiritual craving for them. But of these there can be none when men are all the time talking, or listening to the talk of others, not as those "that feared the Lord," but rather as those who love talk for its own sake—love to hear themselves talk. Here it seems to me is a great national peril, for individual—and as a result national—character is deeply and very directly involved. Such at any rate is the conclusion which I have reached.

Excessive motion I have spoken of as, along with excessive speech, one of the most conspicuous characteristics of our people. I need not stop to prove the statement—it proves itself. Whether this motion is the

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cause or the result of restlessness it would be hard to say. It is enough to know that the present-day restlessness amounts to a disease, infecting both mind and soul. I often think of the words of St. Augustine: "Thou makest us to delight in Thy praise; for Thou madest us for Thyself, and our heart is restless, unless it repose in Thee." This idea of resting in or on any one or any thing is foreign to the thought of the day—resting as men rest on God as a stay, or in the truth as a divine revelation. The Psalmist said that his heart was "fixed." The Lord, as conceived by him, "standeth round about His people" even as "the hills stand about Jerusalem."

One gets from Scripture—certainly I do, and I thank God for it—a sense of permanence, stability and steadfastness. Motion there must be, for without it there is no life. But flightiness, capriciousness (in the derivative meaning of the word), constant running to and fro, and in general a mov-

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ing simply in order that one may be in motion—against all this a cathedral is, by its very existence, an eloquent and greatly needed protest. Like the New Jerusalem, “it hath foundations.” It is, as I have said, related to life precisely as are hills, mountains, fields and forests. It witnesses to the changelessness of essential life, the changelessness of Almighty God. It is not well that men should be chained to the soil, as they once were, but it is well, and even necessary that they should have homes and a settled and established home life. Physical instability is certain to issue in moral, intellectual and spiritual instability. “Wisdom and knowledge,” it is written, “shall be the stability of thy times, and strength of thy salvation.” Wisdom and knowledge are not gifts, but acquisitions, the product of study, meditation, quietness and self-culture. St. Paul prayed for his disciples that they might be “steadfast, unmoveable.”

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There is great lack of intellectual seriousness and spiritual depth. The defect, which is grave, I attribute in large degree to excessive talk and excessive motion. I regard the relation between men and things as only less important than that between men and women. The old home, and everything in it, should be precious to the soul. A great and good man, Charles Lamb, loved his old books and old china only less than he loved his sister. One cannot love things and associations and scenes unless one becomes used to them, and a part of them, but this is impossible unless one lives—and really lives—in and among them. So it was that the men of old loved Jerusalem, loved it as “the place where thine honor dwelleth.” Without something of this fixedness and permanence in human life there can be none of that sturdy faith in God which makes men strong. Isaiah said: “Let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God,” and again: “Thou wilt

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keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on Thee.”

I fear that my people, and all other people are getting away from these great truths and principles. As a consequence, they are losing faith, and are fretting and worrying even in the midst of their frivolities, are over-anxious, and without that strength which has its source in “quietness and confidence.” I have the profoundest sympathy for them, and a consuming desire to help them. It is necessary to develop in men and women a sense of permanent relation to home, family, church and God, and to the great and blessed truths for which all these stand. Motion, I have said, there must be, but none is more important than “the motion of a hidden fire that trembles in the breast.” Of this, I fear, there is little thought, and yet it is “the vital spark of heavenly flame.” The inner life is the true life. The soul is the man. Such are some of the thoughts that I am trying to impress on

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the consciousness of mankind. So I would that man were fixed, not as a plant is, but as a divinely imparted soul should be in its relation to home and God, the two greatest realities of life.

The very word religion implies a certain immobility—spiritual immobility. For religion is a tie or tether binding the soul of man to God. I am sure that Tennyson was inspired when he wrote that it is by prayer that

—the whole round earth is every way
Bound by gold chains about the feet of God.

Even when the Bible writer longed to “flee away” it was in order that he might “be at rest.” He sought a destination and status. As with the soul so it is, I think, with the mind, and perhaps also with the body. Certainly if the mind is to have poise, and possess the power that goes with it, it too must be bound, attached, and even tied to all that is good, true, beautiful and in-

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spiring. It too must seek and win a status, and ever be pointed toward a destination. Only so can it become strong, and grow stronger. As it grows it will move toward a nobler status and a loftier destination. I fear that one of our bishops was right when he said that there was a growing distrust of knowledge, if not scorn of it, and this in spite of our thronged colleges.

Yet "wisdom and knowledge shall be the stability of thy times, and strength of thy salvation." Wisdom, knowledge, stability and salvation, according to Isaiah, go together, as do irreligion or non-religion, flightiness, frothiness and superficiality. A great writer once spoke of "power through repose." It is the power of a noble statue, and a great work of art, and preëminently, as I believe, of a mighty cathedral, such as Lincoln. It is the power that radiates from a mind that is master of itself, serene even "in the midst of alarms." I seem to have a good many favorite texts, but here is an-

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other one: "He shall never be moved, and the righteous shall be had in everlasting remembrance. He will not be afraid of any evil tidings; for his heart standeth fast, and believeth in the Lord." Only as men are thus settled and established can they "go forward" in faith and trust in God and truth, as did the hosts of Israel, shut up between the sea and land, in response to the divine command. The only truly self-possessed man is he who is God-possessed. Jesus Christ is the eternal type.

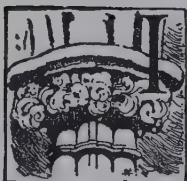
It will, I trust, be noted that it is the righteous that "shall never be moved," that "shall be had in everlasting remembrance," and that "shall not be afraid of any evil tidings" because his "heart standeth fast, and believeth in the Lord." This was, as I read, the thought of Jesus Christ when He said: "Whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them"—that is, whoever is righteous—"I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock;

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and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not; for it was founded upon a rock." The solidity, permanence and unshakableness of the righteous life—it is to this life that both the Psalmist and Jesus Christ bear witness. It is on righteousness, as on a "rock," that such a life and character are built. Such a life and character are themselves a foundation on which others, whole communities indeed, can with safety build—on which they do build with confidence and assurance.

CHAPTER XIV

SOLIDITY AND FREEDOM



HAVE spoken, somewhat frivolously perhaps, of foolish and even silly sermons that I have heard. Let me now recall one which was felt by all who heard it to be a "stay." The preacher, I am sure, would rather that his name should not be mentioned. I may say that he belongs in the company of "the holy and humble men of heart." His text was as follows: "According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereon. For other foundation can no

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man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; every man's work shall be manifest; for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is." The argument was that men were under two obligations—to build on the true foundation, and then to build on it wisely and solidly. To this two-fold duty the sermon was a serious and moving call.

It was argued with great force, and what seemed to me convincing logic, that to fail to perform either of these duties was to make certain the collapse of the structure. No matter how fine the house it will tumble down unless firmly based; no matter how solid the foundation, what is built thereon will not stand if the construction is rotten. Yet, it was shown, men are to-day—as indeed has always been the case—looking for and trying to construct other founda-

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tions than those already laid, and with sufficiently startling results. While others are building on the true foundation the most curious and fantastic structures of, to quote the apostle, "hay" and "stubble." The moral drawn was as sound as it was bold, and that was that the foundation is not enough—even if it be Jesus Christ—to insure the safety of what is built thereon. For though it may be supported by the foundation, the foundation cannot prevent it from falling in on itself unless it is well built.

That surely, said the preacher, is what St. Paul meant when he said: "But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereon. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss; yet he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire." The foundation and the building must both be strong, and welded together in indestructible unity, as

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must the life of man and the life of Jesus Christ. There must be an organic unity between the "rock" and the house built on it, between the foundation and the superstructure of the Christian life. The ideal, so it was said in the sermon, is thus given by St. Paul: "Ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone; in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth into a holy temple in the Lord; in whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.

"Take care," continued the preacher, "where, on what, and how you build, what material you use, and look to the quality of the workmanship and the character of the design. For you are dealing with life, the life of both God and man. Unless the building, which is your character, is 'fitly

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framed,' it cannot stand, no matter how solid the foundation. Unless it rests on and is an organic part of the true foundation, it cannot stand, no matter how beautiful it may seem to be. As there is a 'beauty of holiness' so there is a beauty in simplicity, and the older I grow the surer I am that one of the greatest qualities of our religion is simplicity. We admire simplicity in architecture, and surely this simplicity must mark the divine architecture of which we are now thinking.

"It is against this simplicity that the theologians and Fundamentalists are to-day waging war. They are building on a book, and not on Jesus Christ, as a foundation. And they are building fantastically and after the most complicated and bizarre pattern. They are telling men and women that they cannot rest on Jesus Christ's truth, live in His love, walk in His light, grow into and be sustained by His power, unless they believe in the six-day creation, in Joshua's

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halted sun, in the Babel story, in floating ax-heads, and identify the God of Jesus Christ with that tribal deity who is re-reported to have commanded atrocities at which civilized men to-day shudder. Be not deceived, my friends, neither be confused or terrified. We are the inheritors of a progressive revelation. It is said that God does not change. But man does, as a result of divine education. Jesus Christ did not come to this sinful earth to puzzle men, but to save them, and confer on them the power to enter into, understand and appreciate the truth. Shall they use that power and grow into the truth, or take their 'God from a printed book,' and accept as infallible the outgivings of the narrow literalists who would destroy Christianity as a life, and degrade it into a system? As for me, I will serve 'the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.' "

This is a very faint and inadequate reproduction of what was really a great ser-

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mon, but it is the best a poor little cathedral can do. It warmed my heart, inspired my soul, and filled me with what I trust was an innocent pride. For I felt that I represented, bore witness to, and spoke to men of a religion that was a reality, and a very noble one—a religion that was power. It seemed to me that I could once again hear the “still small voice,” calling men and women to a life, the life of that Spirit that at creation’s dawn “moved upon the face of the waters.” That Spirit brought light then—“God said, Let there be light: and there was light.” The same Spirit is to-day, I have faith to believe, moving on and in the hearts of men, and the result will and must be the same—light and ever more light. I have no fears, and am at peace with myself, and I hope with God. Many doubts I have, but none that touch what I hold to be the ultimate truth of the divine revelation, and I am wholly without doubt as to the splendid triumph of the truth.

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There can, as I feel, be no truth apart from Christian liberty. "Where the Spirit of the Lord is," writes St. Paul, "there is liberty." He speaks to people to-day as truly as to the Galatians when he says: "Stand fast therefore in the liberty where-with Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage." My only anxiety, I may truthfully say, is lest my people, whom I love, be "entangled again with the yoke of bondage." But even over that fear my faith is triumphant—faith in the enlightening, teaching, emancipating Spirit of Almighty God. And what, a cathedral must ask, is liberty? In a famous poem it is written that "the Sons of Martha favor their mother of the careful soul and the troubled heart." My people often sing a hymn in which they speak of themselves as distressed by "fightings and fears, without, within." It is foolish to expect to be delivered from the "fightings, whether they be in the soul, or wholly ex-

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ternal. But "fears," and "the careful soul and the troubled heart"—surely from these Christian liberty ought to emancipate Christian souls. I sometimes doubt whether there ever was a more anxious and worrying age than that in which we are now living. Perhaps this is due to the fact that with the enormously increased chances of success, the chances of failure also seem to be greatly multiplied. It is also true, no doubt, that when there is so much to be won, and so keen a longing for the mere materialities of life, failure seems to take on the nature of a shattering catastrophe. And what men fear most—in this case failure—they are disposed to think of as likely, if not certain to happen.

So the fear grows—feeds on itself, as it were. It may be that the excessive talk and the excessive motion, of which I have spoken, are contributing causes. They certainly have an unsettling and unstablizing effect. People do not strike root deply—not

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even in the material home. Back of it all is, as in the case of Martha, an overvaluing of material things, and the result is a loosened grip on the fundamental and eternal realities. Martha was thinking of the next meal, and it was with that, that "the careful soul and the troubled heart" were concerned. Nor is she to be blamed, for she was animated and inspired by the spirit of hospitality and the longing to serve her divine Guest. But surely when the Bread of Life was offered nothing could have been of less importance than the meal in preparation. In realizing this, and acting on her knowledge, Mary chose "the good part," and in doing so banished fear and anxiety. Christian liberty—at any rate for the moment—was hers, and her emancipation was complete.

A very noble freedom is that which lifts people far above fear, fret and an anxiety that sometimes amounts to anguish. I would not condemn "the careful soul and

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the troubled heart," for often they are careful for and troubled about others—that very often is the case, as it was with Martha. But I am now thinking of Christian liberty, the only true liberty, complete, and triumphant over all enslaving influences and powers. It is one of the greatest and most wonderful gifts bestowed on men by Jesus Christ, for it is part of that life—nay, is it not that very life itself?—which He came to earth to impart to men in overflowing abundance. I am preaching out of my own experience, for I have known fear and anxiety, and am no stranger to "the troubled heart." I am troubled because I am incomplete, and anxious to be finished. I was sadly troubled over the robbing of my poor-box. I once knew a terrible fear when I heard that I was marked for destruction by dynamite.

In a sense I shall always be troubled about my people, whom I desire—and live—to serve and help. But I think I have

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learned to rest on the divine promises. My progress in the spiritual life has not been great, but I think I may say that it has been real. It is my hope that I may exert a steadying, calming, strengthening and emancipating influence on the fearful and care-burdened. If I could know that I was doing this I should be grateful, and feel that I had shared in the divine blessing, and also know that I had not lived in vain.

CHAPTER XV

MY DREAM



CATHEDRALS must often dream. I know I do. One New Year's Eve I had a very curious dream, one that has never ceased to haunt me—but most pleasantly and delightfully. The year about to dawn was in my vision the year 2500, and I suddenly, and at first terrifyingly, found myself to be more than six hundred years old. Quite a venerable age that even for a cathedral. Of course I was far down town, the city having grown fifty or sixty miles beyond me. I was finished—and I was beautiful. There were memorial tablets on my walls, and several tombs in my crypt and beneath the

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pavement of my nave. I was filled with what I hope was a chastened pride, realizing as I did the glory of having entered into full fellowship with the cathedral family. Suddenly my chimes rang out—chimes which I had not known I possessed—with the passing year, and the message which they carried over the housetops, and no doubt to many discouraged hearts, was this:

O God our help in ages past,
Our hope for years to come,
Be Thou our guide while life shall last,
And our eternal home.

“In ages past”—surely, and yet it seemed to me that the present was eternal. One of the tombs, and beautiful it was, was that of the bishop who had laid my cornerstone six hundred years before. I was much impressed with the good sense and fine taste of the inscription: “According to the grace of God which is given unto me,

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as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon.” There was a tablet to the memory of my old chess-playing friend and his wife on which were inscribed the words of the Psalmist: “There is sprung up a light for the righteous, and the joyful gladness for such as are true-hearted.” Another memorial was to the woman who, six centuries before had prompted the nominator of a candidate for bishop who had forgotten the name of his candidate. Of her it was written: “The Lord is my light and my salvation, whom then shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life; of whom then shall I be afraid?” The only tablet having historical significance was in memory of Woodrow Wilson, as crusader for peace, with this inscription: “I labor for peace, but when I speak unto them thereof they make them ready to battle.”

My windows were a blaze of beauty, glit-

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tering with a light that was warming and brilliant, and yet, not garish, but, rather, subdued. My prayer for "glory in glass" had been answered. Suddenly there flashed into my mind the words: "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and to-day, and forever." In the service which in my dream I witnessed, and participated in, the people were instructed out of the old Bible, professed the old creed (and I thought with astonishing fervor), chanted the old Litany, and offered the old sacrifice of the altar. Though the "upper room," of which I have had something to say, was six hundred years further away, it seemed as near at hand as in the old days of 1900. Recalling the predictions I had sometimes heard of the passing of Christianity, I was deeply interested in the conversation of two men after the service. "I have," said one of them "just been reading an old book, published in 1926, in which much is said of Modern-

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ism and Fundamentalism. It was all new to me." The second man confessed that he had never heard of either. The first speaker then tried to give a definition of the terms, his effort not being very successful, and wound up by saying: "What queer people those of the twentieth century were!"

The point, as I seemed to get it, was that though Fundamentalism and Modernism had vanished utterly, the old faith still survived, the faith summed up in the words: "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and to-day, and forever." For almost seven hundred years, or so I dreamed, I had stood as a witness to that faith, the faith of 2500 as well as of 1900, quite as firmly, but as I seemed to feel, more intelligently held—the faith that was even then sounding from my chimes. I heard the bishop preach, and he seemed a worthy and able man. But my memory—for I began to dream, as it were, backward—was busy with another bishop,

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the one to whom I owe my humble beginnings, himself the humblest of men, and a true servant of Jesus Christ. Though many have come and gone since his day, he was still "my bishop."

In my dream I seemed to recall a man—very wise he thought himself—who wrote a book entitled "The Time Machine." There is and can be no such time machine as a cathedral, for it makes the past present, the present past, and converts the future into a present reality. Meditating thus I became more and more confused, the happenings and the people of 2500 mingling in the strangest way with those of 1927. Then it was that I woke with a start to find myself unfinished, chimeless, and with the old plain windows—and yet happy. For my dream I interpreted as a prophecy, which I did not dare doubt would be fulfilled. Most of the people whose tombs and tablets I had seen were still alive, and I rejoiced

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that it was so. I was really glad that I was not six hundred years old. But it was an inspiring and comforting dream. Perhaps it will be repeated—I certainly hope so. Perhaps it will come true!

CHAPTER XVI

FAREWELL



I WOULD close this perhaps tediously long talk about myself with an expression of gratitude to the preacher whose sermon on building I have summarized. He, I am sure, spoke for God, and as God would have had him speak. Then it was that I began to grow—not physically, that will come later—but in spiritual power and in my perception of truth. It is not generally understood that cathedrals are always in grave peril, as parts of a more or less elaborate system and as official representatives of certain doctrines. They may become great machines, with only a “ghastly

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smooth life, dead at heart." There is here a real peril, and one from which cathedrals have not always—and not all of them—escaped. It may have been something of this that was in Mr. Walpole's mind when he wrote "The Cathedral."

I should deem myself unspeakably happy if I could truly apply to myself the great words of a man of whose life, growth was the law, and freedom the inspiration and crown: "Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth to those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." Even without an ambulatory, a glorious choir and chancel, glowing windows, "brasses black and red," and much

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else that pertains to physical structure, I may be able to influence human souls for good, strengthen their faith, increase their knowledge, inspire and satisfy their divine passion for liberty, and warm their hearts with a flaming love for that truth which is the source whence liberty proceeds. The greatness of the mission which I know to be mine makes me humble, though not distrustful—not distrustful even of self—for I hear in the depths of my soul the “still small voice” saying “certainly I will be with thee,” and I am calmly confident that “I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.”

I have and cherish

—one thought, at least,
Though the whole earth should lie in wickedness,
We had the truth, might leave the rest to God.

This poor, laboring world needs many things, but I sometimes think there is nothing that it needs more than kindness. “Let

all bitterness," writes St. Paul, "and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: and be ye kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you." I would close the record with this thought—the thought of kindness and gentleness, and peace. To the young in particular I would speak out of my experience, for am I not one of them, being young myself—as a cathedral? I would summon them to membership in and co-operation with the great fellowship of peace and good will—the church of Jesus Christ. I have learned something of what it means to "love as brethren." Love, it is written, is greater than faith, and I suppose that is true. But I am convinced that without faith there could—and can—be no true, deep and abiding love. That conviction seems to be one of the fruits of my life.

I can truly say that of the people I have

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known those have loved most who have had the staunchest faith. The lesson I have learned has cost me something in pain, but also it has brought to me that joy of which Jesus Christ spoke when He said: "Your joy no man taketh from you." So I bring my tale to a close, with a certain regret, for I feel that I have been communing with friends, both living and dead, and to make an end seems in a way to be severing myself from them. But surely we are "knit together in one communion and fellowship." I thank God that I have a faith which I do not believe anything—or any one—can shake, and I would share it with my people, whom I love, and whom it is my heartfelt desire to serve. And so to them I say, Farewell, and God be with you!

*O Almighty God, who hast knit together
thine elect in one communion and fellow-
ship, in the mystical body of thy Son Christ
our Lord; Grant us grace so to follow thy*

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blessed saints in all virtuous and godly living, that we may come to those unspeakable joys which thou hast prepared for those who unfeignedly love thee; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

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